

The Atlantic

HOMOSEXUALITY

AND BIOLOGY



BY
CHANDLER BURR

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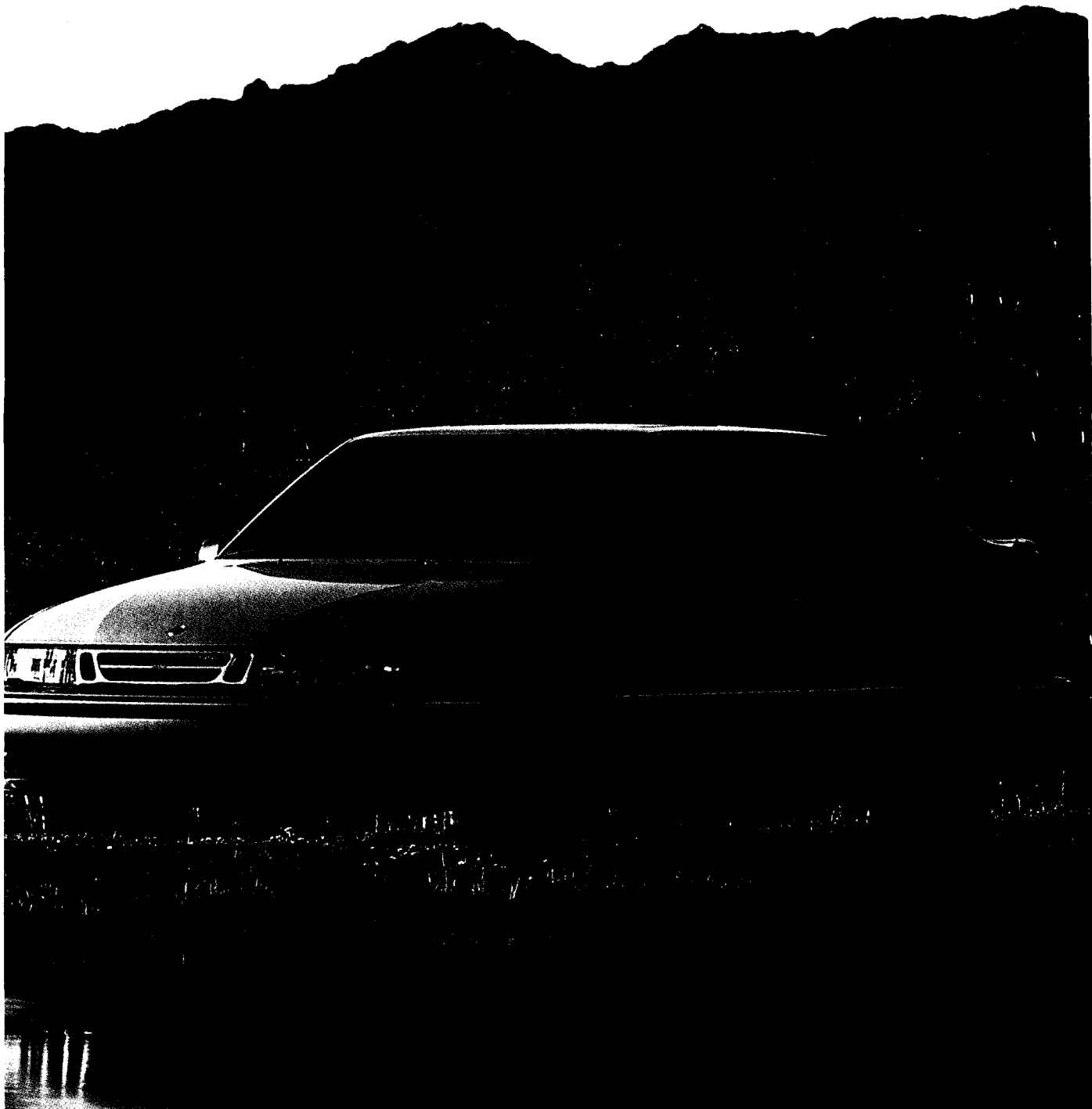


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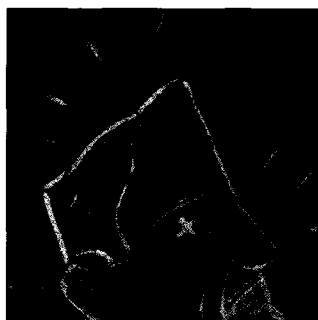
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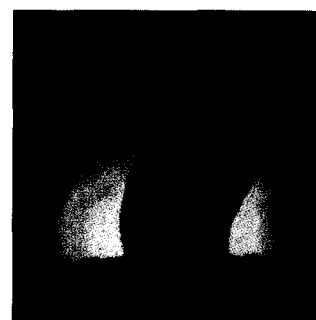
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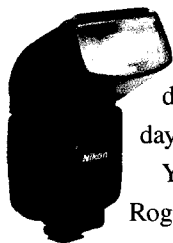
by CRAIG M. CARVER

Cover illustration by
Fred Otnes

A query, if we may.

How do you get a vision that's in your head onto a piece of film not much larger than your average postage stamp?

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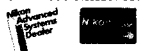
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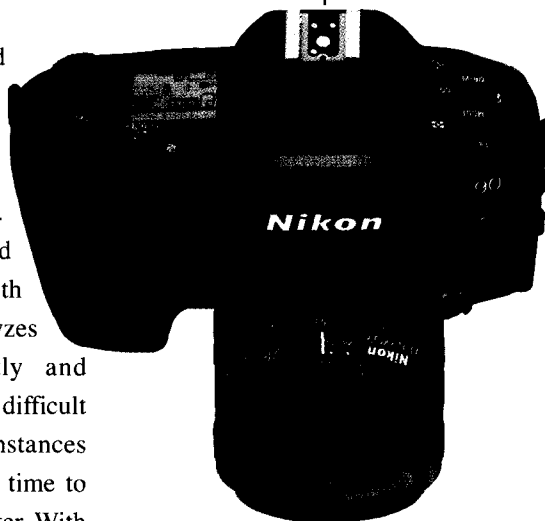
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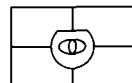
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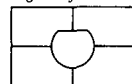
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THE RECENT PUBLICATION of *Contemporary New England Stories* represents something of a hat trick for our senior editor C. Michael Curtis: it is the third collection of stories that he has edited and published during the past three years. The three volumes together contain, among other stories, forty-five that have been published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, virtually all of them originally selected by Curtis, who has for thirty years been the editor chiefly responsible for fiction. A good many of the stories are by writers whom Curtis nurtured.

Serendipity brought Michael Curtis to *The Atlantic*. At a poetry conference in 1961 at Cornell University, his alma mater, Curtis met an *Atlantic* editor who agreed to read some of his poems—and liked and published several of them. Curtis at the time was pursuing a doctorate in political science even as he held the editorship of his university's literary magazine, *The Trojan Horse*. He spent the summer of 1961 at *The Atlantic* as a manuscript reader, and then, after two more years of graduate school, joined the magazine's staff full-time as an editor. Besides reading many of the short stories that arrive at these premises, Curtis spends a considerable amount of time at

literary conferences and writing programs in the role of teacher, critic, and scout. Given his passion for basketball, during wintertime he can be lured with embarrassing ease to university seminars in such states as Michigan, Iowa, and Kansas.

Why his interest in fiction? Stories, he has written, are "our way of reminding ourselves who we are or want to be or might have been." In his reading Curtis looks for stories that are "wise, and fresh, and imaginative," stories that have "moral weight," stories in which, above all, "Something Happens." Of the stories in one of his collections Curtis wrote: "They do not so much resist interpretation as survive its scrutiny. They take us where we haven't been or point us to what we missed while we were there. They please us in the way of unexpected kindness, or alarm in the way of unwelcome self-discovery."

Contemporary New England Stories is available from Globe Pequot Press, in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. Curtis's previous collections, *American Stories* and *American Stories II*, were published by Chronicle Books, in San Francisco. A fourth collection will be published next fall. —THE EDITORS



MARTIN CORNELL

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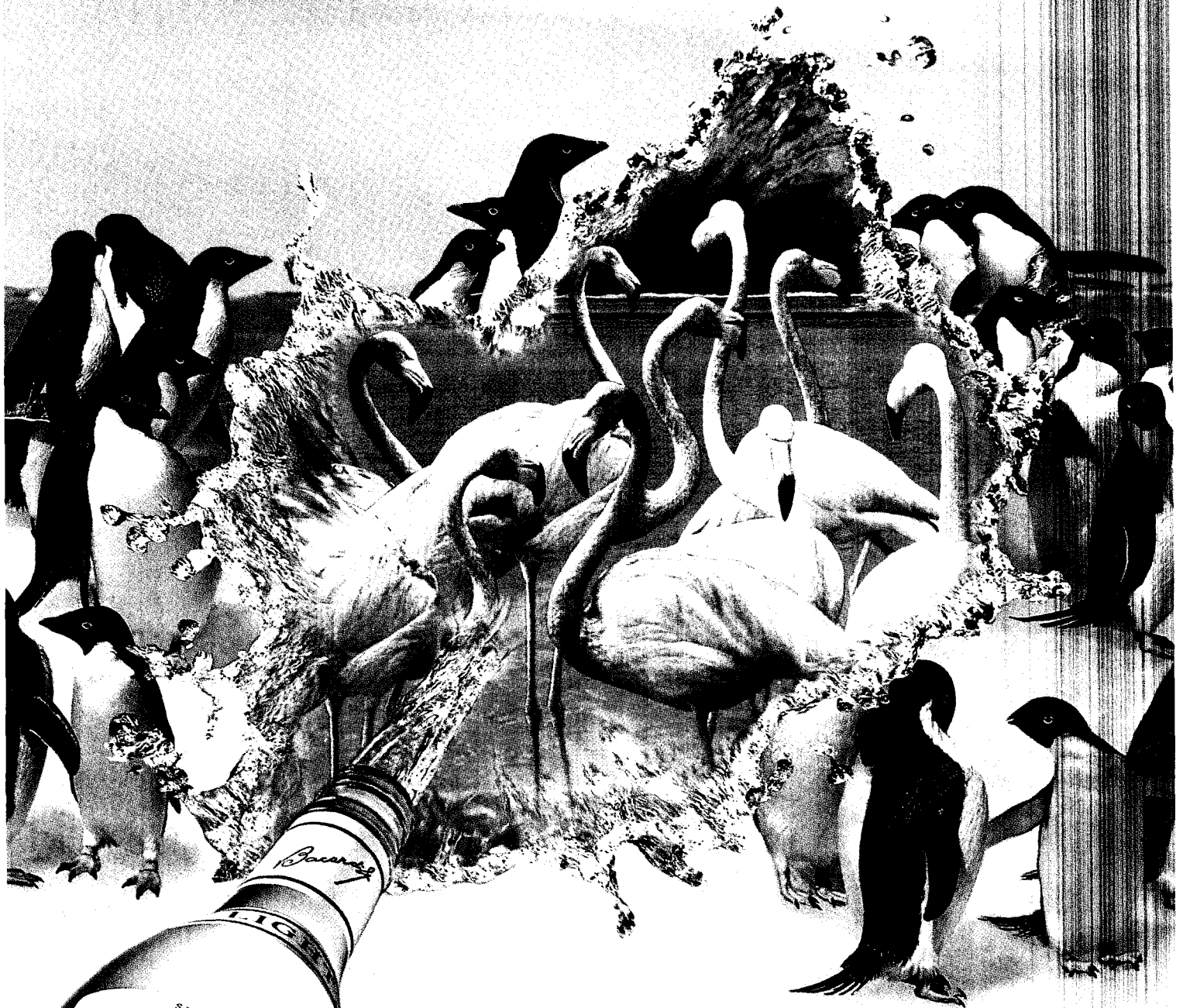
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



NEW GENERATION GAP

"The New Generation Gap," by Neil Howe and William Strauss (December *Atlantic*), could have been written only by self-described Boomers, whom I wish to dissociate from Boomers—perhaps by calling them Blasters, for their propensity to be louder yet. Only they define the world so completely with statistics. This is not surprising. After all, Blasters so call themselves because they form a statistical phenomenon: a curve on a graph.

Blasters have a predisposition to look for—and find—all people within statistical groupings. That is where they find themselves. They grew up in an age when pollsters became commonplace and polls began to influence government policy in a big way.

Theirs was the first generation to be seen as theoretical numbers—marketers perfected the market survey on them, Nielsen charted Boomers' television-watching habits first, and Boomers were the first to see (and Blasters the first to become forever entranced by) accurate reflections of themselves in the demographic statistics compiled incessantly at every step of their growth.

University courses devoted to the study of statistics began, and grew very popular, only when Blasters formed part of the young, incoming Boomer faculty. When young Blasters arrived in television studios, they made shows that reflected their homage to the numerical scheme of viewing the world—*thirtysomething* is more appropriately named than the producers ever thought, and that serial's flip side, *Married . . . With Children*, draws its title from a phrase on demographic surveys.

Howe and Strauss, no doubt meaning well (just like a lot of other Boomers), subject the young to a classificatory scheme of the world drawn from their own experiences but quite irrelevant to those who are younger. It would have to be a Blaster who insists on

defining the onward stagger of civilization in terms of consecutive statistical groupings called generations. It would have to be a Blaster who must with minute precision locate everyone within those statistical parameters: "Defined by its personality type, this generation [1943–1960] is somewhat different from the group defined simply by the well-known demographic fertility bulge (1946–1964)." The authors' attempts to nail down exact beginning and end dates for the wholly fictitious thing they call "the thirteenth generation" are even more tortuous.

Only Blasters look for generation-wide generalizations, using statistical information-gathering methods—because that is the only way they know how to define anything, including themselves. "Thirteeners," as Howe and Strauss prefer, or "Xers" or "posties" or "baby busters"—or how about just "people born from 1961 to 1981"?—are not a homogeneous bunch, and what's more, they don't see the so-called Boomers as a homogeneous bunch either.

The authors admit that the radicals and hippies that defined the Boomer generation numbered only 10 to 15 percent of America's circa-1970 youth. Nonetheless, the authors have, true to Blaster form, ignored the staggering 85–90 percent margin of error. It is part of their homage to statistics that Blasters will not make a statistical statement without mentioning the margin of error, whether they pay attention to it or not. Mentioning the margin of error, Blasters think, validates statistical statements, makes them more credible.

I may not have a facility for wielding statistics, but isn't a generalization that is wrong 85 to 90 percent of the time one that should be abandoned, rather than used as a model? Human beings make babies all the time, not just in a flurry every twenty years. As handy as the generational model is for making broad statements about the direction of the nation, let's not forget that the concept of a generation applied other than

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in the context of a closed family unit is an abstraction, and bears little resemblance to reality.

Aside from the most facile similarities, people born from 1961 to 1981 are as different from one another as, well, people who were born from 1943 to 1960. But, since Blasters love their numbers and statistics, we will all continue to be so grouped by them. I suppose we will just have to wait for Blasters to die off so we can factor them out of the equation altogether. Maybe then we can give this whole number-crunching thing a rest.

KEVIN POTVIN
Vancouver, B.C.

I wish to challenge the common perception of my generation—the “Thirteeners”—as underachievers, drifters, and live-for-today consumers. I am appalled by Neil Howe and William Strauss’s description of my generation as “reckless bicycle messengers, pizza drivers, yard workers, Wal-Mart shelf-stockers, health-care trainees, and miscellaneous scavengers, hustlers, and McJobbers in the low-wage/low-benefit service economy.” Likewise, I object to the illustrations, which depict young people as irreverent day-dreamers, skateboarders, and street punks.

While these descriptions may be appropriate for some high school students, they do not fit the group that I call the “In-Betweeners.” These are the young adults aged twenty-four to thirty who have for the most part sown their wild oats and are consciously trying to find their place in today’s world. They are budding accountants, lawyers, engineers, and teachers. They are young married couples trying to set family and career goals. Some are graduate students, now finishing their master’s and doctoral studies. Others, like me, have been working in a professional capacity for at least three to five years.

In-Betweeners grew up listening to Billy Joel and Fleetwood Mac, not rap. In many ways we feel closer to the generation ahead of us than to the half-generation behind us. Many of us have friends in their thirties—people who, like us, seem to be struggling with their identities. Our feeling toward these tail-end Baby Boomers is one not of animosity but of intrigue. What issues are they dealing with now? And how can we learn from their mistakes?

Although “The New Generation Gap” offers many powerful observations, it does not portray my generation as accurately as it could have. Instead, it perpetuates many of the stereotypes that In-Betweeners are working hard to change. As I read the article, I couldn’t help wondering which generation(s) the authors claim as their own. My guess is that they’re not Thirteeners—or In-Betweeners.

CAROLYN M. BOND
Hatboro, Pa.

I am in total agreement with Neil Howe and William Strauss’s “The New Generation Gap.” I might quibble over specific points, but the overall argument was perfect. My one major problem was the article’s length. As a Thirteeners, I had trouble concentrating on one thing for so long. My solution: I read it in three parts.

By the way, how old are Howe and Strauss?

CHRIS BERTELSEN
Chicago, Ill.

Neil Howe and William Strauss reply:

As two Boomer writers, we are not inclined to argue with any Thirteeners’ critiques of how we described their generation. If you’re a Thirteeners, you know the world you inhabit, and who’s to quarrel with how you see it? But we would like to make two points. First, much of what we described in our article is the Thirteenth Generation’s *reputation* in the eyes of other Americans. History teaches that peer-group reputations, acquired young, have an odd way of sticking to generations deep into old age. The kinds of remarks—good and bad—that older people are making about Thirteeners today probably aren’t much different from what younger people will be saying about Thirteeners twenty years from now.

Second, Thirteeners don’t have to think and act like most other people their age to belong to a generation. Men and women in their teens or twenties can’t help sharing with their peers a vast array of age-specific formative experiences. Those cumulating experiences will always be unique to their age group. And in the years to come the collective personality of that generation will be important to its members—whether they’re defining its cutting edge, just moving with its flow, or battling against it. As Thomas



Dr. Karen Strauss, environmental engineer, with son Luke and daughter Jenny

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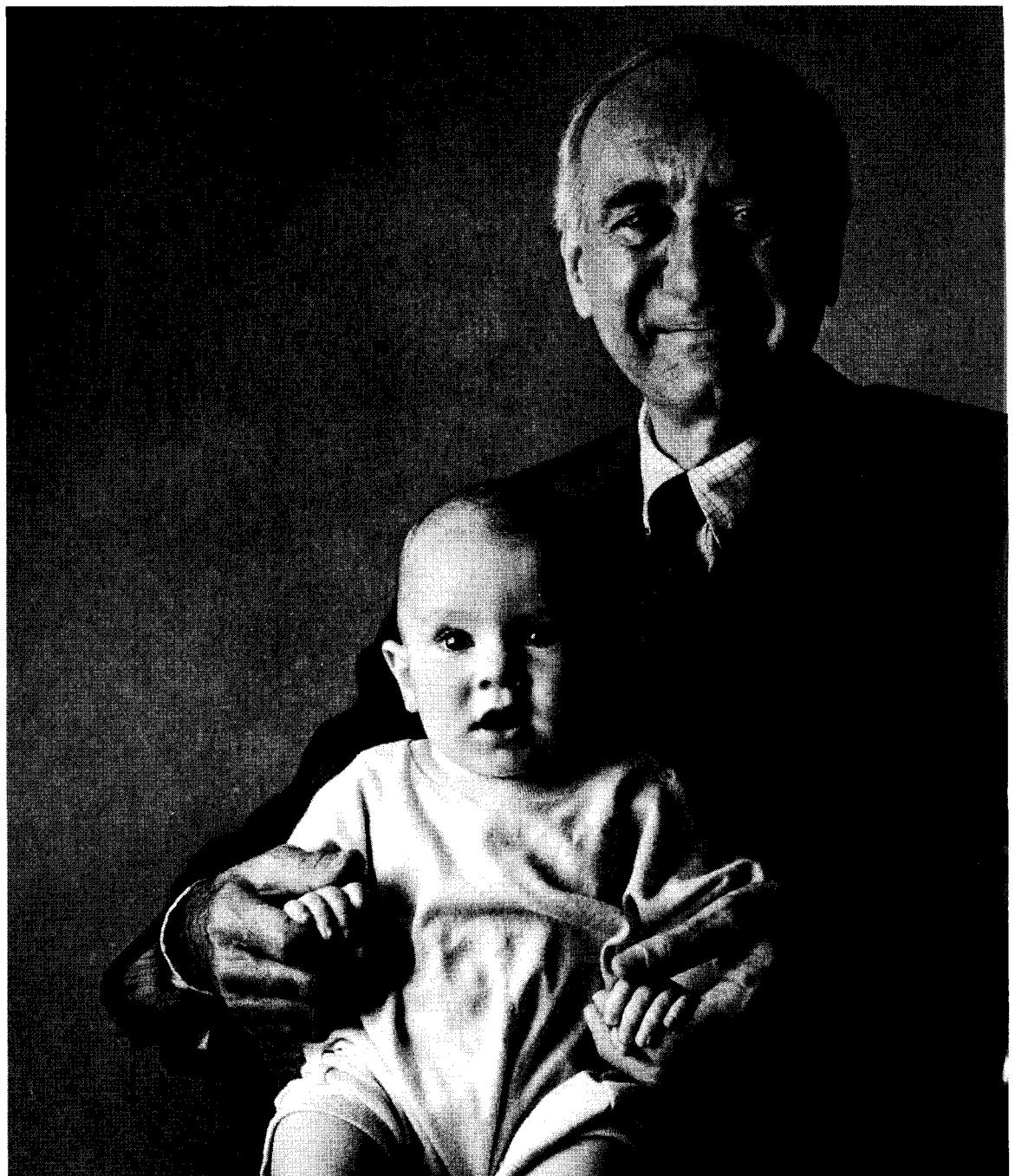
"The world of our children and our grandchildren will need more electricity

for healthy economic growth," Dr. Strauss says. "No single energy source is the whole solution. But nuclear energy is part of the solution. The U.S. already has 110 nuclear plants producing clean electricity with no air pollution. That's a precious environmental advantage for us and, even more, for future generations."

The more you know about energy choices, the more you can participate in those choices. For a free booklet on nuclear energy (including the national plan for safe nuclear waste disposal), just write to the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, P.O. Box 66080, Department K, Washington, D.C. 20035.

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No. Every male is not destined to develop prostate problems. However, prostate enlargement is a common medical finding. In fact, more than half of men over 50 have an enlarged prostate. To help you understand the prostate, here are some important facts.

What and where the prostate is

The prostate gland is located just below the bladder. At birth, the

prostate is about the size of an almond. It will remain that size through childhood. During puberty, it will double in size. Then it stops growing.

The prostate supplies the milky fluid that helps transport sperm through the penis during ejaculation. This prostatic fluid also aids conception by providing support and nourishment for the sperm and helping to make the vaginal canal less acidic.

The renewed growth of the prostate at middle age

In most men, after age 45, the prostate starts to enlarge and may continue to enlarge for the rest of a man's life. This growth may be benign prostate enlargement, a noncancerous condition. A major cause is the activity of a key hormone.

By itself, benign prostate enlargement isn't a problem. But, the prostate gland surrounds a section of the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder through the penis. As the prostate continues to grow, it can squeeze the urethra (like pinching a straw) and interfere with the normal flow of urine, causing uncomfortable and embarrassing symptoms.

However, benign prostate enlargement is not a progressive condition in all men.

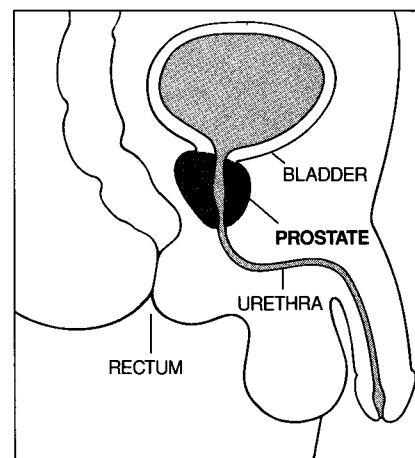
The urinary symptoms of an enlarged prostate

Among the symptoms commonly associated with an enlarged prostate are more frequent urination, especially during the night, or the sudden, almost uncontrollable urge to urinate. The added pressure on the urethra can also cause a weak, interrupted urine stream, a sense of the bladder not emptying completely, leakage, and difficulty in starting urination. It can even result in total blockage, a serious condition.

Why you should consult the doctor

Symptomatic benign prostate enlargement can be helped. Recent advances in treatment have been made, and today your doctor has several options. So now, more than ever, is an excellent time to consult your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss which treatment option would be best for you.

If you experience any symptoms, see your doctor and speak frankly



The prostate is located at the base of the bladder. It surrounds a part of the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder through the penis. As the prostate enlarges, it can squeeze the urethra and cause urinary problems.

about the problem. A simple rectal examination enables the doctor to feel, with a gloved finger, the size and condition of the prostate. This exam, and other tests the doctor may recommend, will also help to rule out the possibility of prostate cancer. Benign prostate enlargement is not cancer and does not turn into cancer.

Talk to your doctor, soon. It can pay off for years to come. And, for a free informative booklet, "What every man should know about his prostate," call 1-800-635-4452.





Wolfe's character Hunt Conroy says about Wolfe's own "Lost" Generation, "You belong to it, too. You came along at the same time. You can't get away from it. You're a part of it whether you want to be or not."

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Jonathan Schlefer ("What Price Economic Growth?" December *Atlantic*) overlooks two crucial questions when he reports on free trade with Mexico.

What becomes of a secure southern border for the United States? Without NAFTA, 90 million Mexicans, some without work and others underemployed, would be condemned to shortages and higher prices for basic necessities, and a return to Third World lifestyles. Their passion would be ignited once again as foreign relations fell to the low of the period after they lost Texas and California, or when we occupied Veracruz during the First World War. The United States would pay dearly to reduce (not eliminate) the

ill will created by the loss of NAFTA.

And what becomes of America's growing irredentist problem? The Spanish-speaking enclaves throughout the American Southwest endanger America's social comity. Let's agree with President Salinas of Mexico: It's better for both countries if Mexicans find work at home rather than finding alienation across the border.

Schlefer also makes a false analogy. As Canada goes, so goes the United States—or American jobs will flee to Mexico.

Canada's economy is the size of California's economy. Before free trade with the United States, Canada's manufacturing sector was protected by high tariffs, restrictive foreign-investment rules, and a range of ill-advised, nongrowth economic policies. The result: inefficient, high-cost, limited-line manufacturing for a small national market, about 26 million people. With free trade Canada's manufacturing sector is unprotected, but it can sell its goods in a binational market of 272 million—that is, if Canadian firms improve efficiency, raise

productivity, keep costs competitive, spend money on research and development, and invest where the returns are the greatest. That's what Northern Telecom, Macmillan Bloedel, and others did before and during free trade with the United States.

Canadian jobs were lost in steel and automobiles—two sectors that have not been robust in the United States because of Asian competition. So to condemn free trade on the basis of job destruction in Canada is to misunderstand North America's competitive strengths and weaknesses in the world economy.

Mexico's economy is the size of Los Angeles's economy. To suggest that a tiny national economy to the south of the United States will rob us of our manufacturing base strains credibility. Mexico wants guaranteed access to the United States (call this free trade) so that it can employ Mexicans at home, do joint distribution deals with U.S. firms (such as Vitro and Corning), and invest in the United States (for example, Alfa buys glass manufacturers in the United States).

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A better analogy is the thirty-year free-trade experiment in Europe. The twelve nations of Europe pooled their economic sovereignty to create a more competitive whole now called the European Community. Have the Germans been denuded of their manufacturing jobs because labor costs are lower in Italy, Spain, and Portugal?

So why is NAFTA a good deal for the United States?

Mexico is a market for our technologically sophisticated goods (railroads, tunnels, water and sewer systems).

Mexico is the only consumer market in North America with the potential to double its effective consumers from 20 to 40 million people within the next fifteen to twenty years.

Mexico remains a good neighbor sharing a peaceful border with us.

DOUGLAS LAMONT
*Northwestern University
Chicago, Ill.*

Jonathan Schlefer notes that the concerns of Canada's NAFTA critics "center on erosion of the welfare state." How-

ever, what the critics ignore is that Canada's welfare state wobbles on a mountain of debt that is almost twice that of the United States, nationally and per capita. Much of it arose because the Pearson government forced the provinces into adopting universal medical care in the mid-1960s. If they refused to adhere to Ottawa's guidelines, they would be denied Ottawa's proffered 50 percent of the program's costs.

This did two things. First, it destroyed the federal principle by which provinces were responsible not only for public health but also for financing its associated costs from their own revenues or from borrowing on their sole credit. Second, it forced the national government, when the costs of "free" medical care and other social programs inevitably rose, to borrow on the public credit of Canada. In the Trudeau years, from 1969 to 1984, while defense sank to fourteenth on the government's list of priorities, the federal debt increased tenfold.

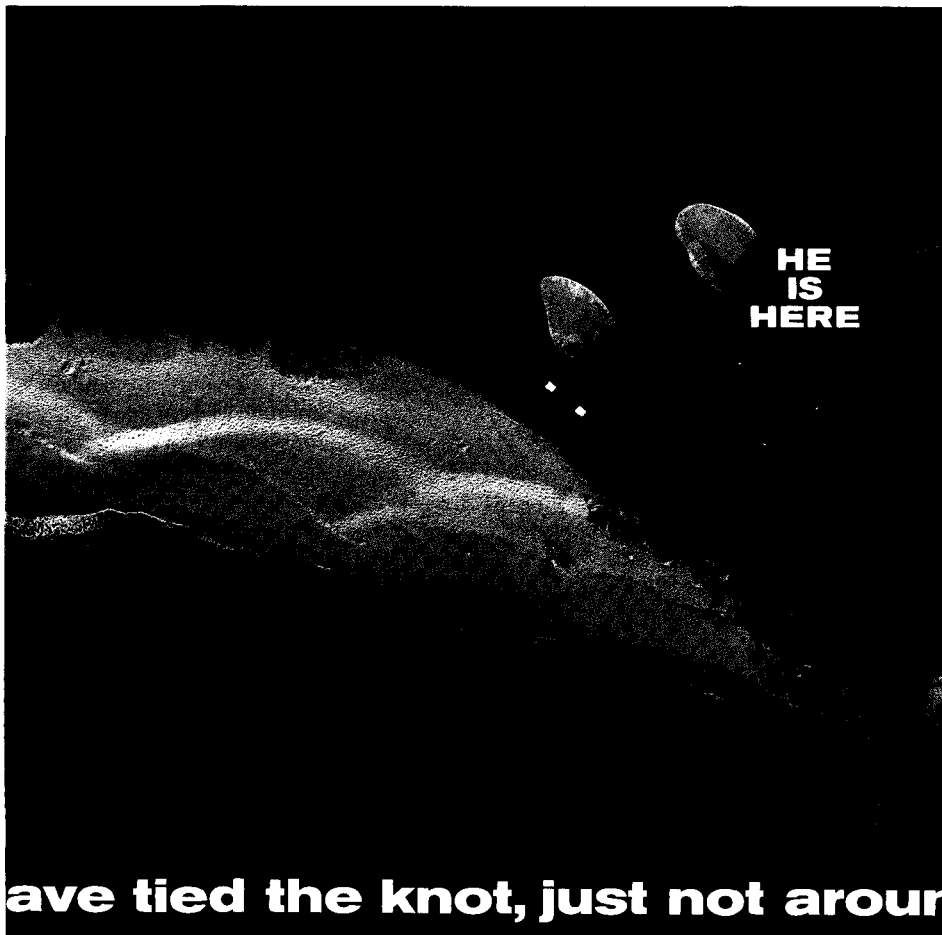
Canada's social programs are threatened not by NAFTA but by the fact that

they depend on borrowed money—spent not on investment to create wealth but on consumption to create the illusion of welfare.

KENNETH McDONALD
Willowdale, Ont.

Jonathan Schlefer makes two errors in his discussion of free-trade arrangements. One is to underestimate the effect of an extremely restrictive monetary policy in Canada (while overestimating the effect of the free-trade agreement itself). The other is to repeat (essentially without analysis) statements suggesting that Canada's social programs, more comprehensive and thorough than those in the United States, uniformly interfere with Canadian industrial competitiveness. Both errors cause him to end up somewhat wide of the mark.

Following are simple but important data taken from statistical tables in the back pages of a recent issue of *The Economist*. They clearly illustrate the deleterious effect on employment of



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ave tied the knot, just not around each other.



extremely high real interest rates, a matter quite independent of the free-trade agreement. (Even so, total industrial production in Canada increased during the past year at a rate faster than that in the United States, after a decrease in the preceding year).

	<i>Canada</i> %	<i>U.S.</i> %
Unemployment (September)	11.4	7.5
Industrial production (one year)	+0.9	+0.2
Inflation (consumer prices, one year)	+1.3	+3.0
Nominal interest rate (prime lending)	7.5	6.0
Real interest rate	6.2	3.0

Observations by Lee Iacocca, of Chrysler Corporation, show the fallacy of assuming that more comprehensive and thorough social programs uniformly hurt competitiveness. He observed several years ago that identical automobiles could be produced far less expensively at the Ontario end of the Ambassador Bridge than at the Michigan end. The reason: universal and cost-efficient Canadian health-care arrangements paid from general tax revenues, in contrast to spotty and cost-inefficient U.S. health-care arrangements paid by employers.

Overlooking these considerations detracts from one of the author's important points—namely, that social justice and economic progress contribute to and support each other.

HENRY H. WEBSTER
Roseville, Minn.

Jonathan Schlefer replies:

Douglas Lamont says that Mexico's economy is so tiny it cannot rob our manufacturing base, yet it is an important market for our exports. Well, which is it? Surely 90 million Mexicans will be an increasingly important market, and as Mexico strengthens its manufacturing in coming decades, it could well threaten U.S. plants and erode wages. I do not see immigration in such dire terms as Mr. Lamont does. As NAFTA opens Mexican corn and wheat markets to imports from efficient Midwest farms, it will drive peasants off the land—many of them to the United States. It will also increase manufacturing jobs in Mexico.

What the net effect will be on immigration is not clear.

Kenneth McDonald seems to think that social programs alone caused the Canadian budget deficits. In fact corporate income taxes fell from 13.6 percent of government revenue in 1975 to 8.6 percent in 1988, bringing them closer to U.S. levels and in effect opening up a substantial deficit. Income taxes on the wealthy also fell. The FTA impedes cutting the deficit by raising taxes on corporations or investors that could move their assets south. As Mr. Webster notes, a program like health insurance aids business and appears safe—but unemployment insurance, a cost to firms as well as employees, has been cut. After the FTA, social programs seem to be judged by their effect on competitiveness.

As Henry Webster says, the Bank of Canada's high interest rates (mentioned in my article) helped make the recession far deeper in Canada than in the United States. However, in such a case a country's trade balance should improve: unemployed workers buy fewer imports, while foreigners still buy exports. The Canadian trade surplus rose \$10 billion in the 1982 recession, but this time it fell in inflation-adjusted dollars. The loss of 11 percent of Canadian manufacturing seems to be due to multinationals' long-term decisions, based on the free-trade agreement, to supply the market from lower-cost U.S. plants when the economy revives. This was my point, though the FTA doubtless helped the Bank of Canada to deepen the recession.

JEFFERSON'S CHARACTER

Douglas L. Wilson's thoughtful article "Thomas Jefferson and the Character Issue" (November *Atlantic*) describes Jefferson as our "most prominent Founding Father."

I would argue that great as he may be for his authorship of the Declaration of Independence, that does not quite qualify him as a Founding Father of our Republic. Jefferson was not a delegate to the Constitutional Convention or a signer of the Constitution. He was not a member of the First Congress, which proposed our Bill of Rights, added in 1791.

His role in creating the initial Confederation is not, to my mind, equal to

Washington's role, as the first President, in creating our constitutional form of government. As Jefferson himself said, "there was nobody so well qualified . . . to put our new machine into regular course of action, nobody the authority of whose name could have so effectually . . . produced respect."

But Jefferson has no claim to be among the makers of that machine and in that sense no claim to be one of its Founding Fathers, though he could claim in a wider sense to be a founder of the concept of the United States.

DONALD F. X. FINN
Historians-at-Work
Millington, N.J.

I often think that if some historians are given enough space, incomplete history, and curious reasoning, they can make even the most barbarous acts in history seem entirely understandable and justifiable. This is the impression that Douglas L. Wilson gives in "Thomas Jefferson and the Character Issue." Wilson gives some surprising visions of Jefferson that just do not square with other, less flattering portraits. Maybe that is to be expected. Wilson writes, "How did a man who was born into a slaveholding society, whose family . . . owned slaves, who inherited a fortune that was dependent on slaves and slave labor, decide . . . that slavery was morally wrong and forcefully declare that it ought to be abolished?" Apparently Wilson believes that Thomas Jefferson's words were and remain far more important than his actions. Did Jefferson free his slaves? He did not. And what is there, then, to keep us and those who come after us from viewing Jefferson as a hypocrite? Nothing. Wilson speaks of "legal restrictions and other obstacles" that a slaveholder would face in freeing his slaves, suggesting that these were far too daunting for Jefferson to overcome. That argument is not only weak but also phony. Should we believe that Jefferson, a governor of Virginia, a Vice-President, and the third President of the United States, could not find a way to surmount the restrictions and obstacles that Wilson says existed, and find a secure life and livelihood for his manumitted slaves?

At what point in human history do acts of barbarism and inhumanity become exactly that, and not some vision distorted by being viewed through the lens of "presentism"? What is the cut-



off point between making an accurate moral assessment of the deeds of historical figures and excusing them because of our contemporary sense of right and wrong? Wilson and other historians are on dangerous ground with the ideas of "presentism." I hope that others will not join them.

FEL ROUSE III
Philadelphia, Pa.

Douglas L. Wilson replies:

I have no quarrel with Donald Finn's distinction by which Jefferson may be considered a founder of the Republic in the "wider" (and more familiar) sense of the term, if not in the narrower sense of having been one of the creators of the Constitution of 1787. That Jefferson was serving as Minister to France at the time of the Constitutional Convention, and thus was out of the country, can take nothing away from either his prior participation in the revolutionary events that transformed British colonies into a confederation of states or his authorship of the document whose adoption has long been celebrated as the founding act of the American nation. As Abraham Lincoln liked to point out, the country is older than the Constitution, which did not presume to start from scratch but stated frankly that its aim was to form a "more perfect union."

Fel Rouse's objections to my essay certainly go to the heart of the question of how Jefferson should be remembered. We agree that he was a slaveholder who denounced slavery. For Mr. Rouse this is a clear-cut case of unmitigated hypocrisy and should be viewed as nothing less. He apparently regards it as appalling that anyone should think "that Thomas Jefferson's words were and remain far more important than his actions."

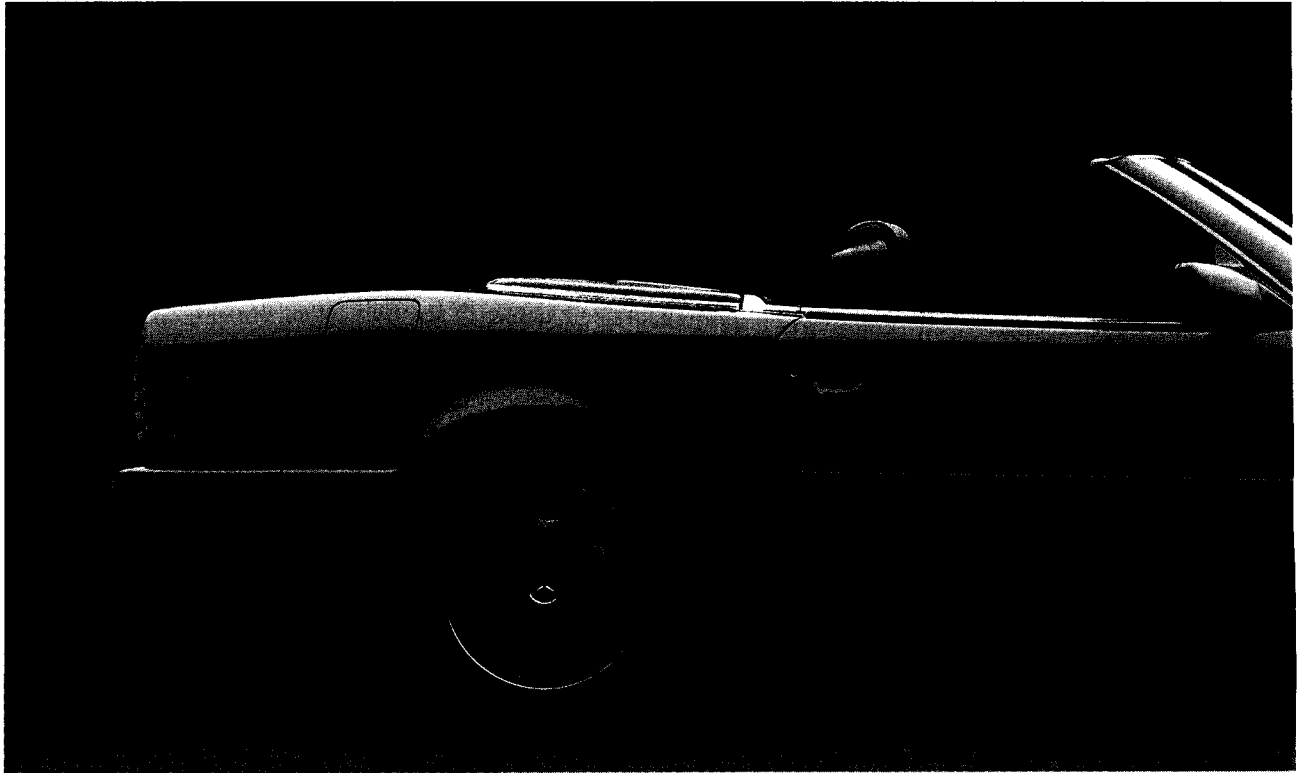
But does Mr. Rouse seriously believe that Jefferson's inability to extricate himself from slaveholding is more important in the scale of human history than his denunciations of slavery and his powerful advocacy of freedom and equality? If so, he would have a hard time convincing the opponents of tyranny around the world—or, closer to home, the descendants of slaves who organized and led the civil-rights movement of the 1960s.

The question with which Mr. Rouse concludes his letter is particularly apt. In asking "At what point in human his-

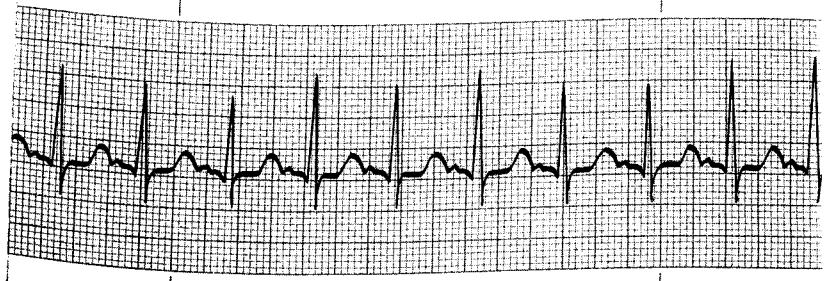
tory do acts of barbarism and inhumanity become exactly that?" he calls attention to the crux of the problem, for history is nothing if not a process whereby the rules for human conduct are constantly being rewritten. What was valued or permitted in the past often becomes utterly unthinkable in the present. For most of recorded history and presumably long before it, slavery was an accepted institution and was widely considered an indication of the slaveholder's superiority and good fortune. In very recent times, only a few

hundred years ago, this institution came under attack in the Western world and was eventually driven into extinction as barbarous and inhumane. Arguably the most influential rationale and rallying cry for that historical turnaround came from a slaveholding Virginian. At what point do acts of barbarism and inhumanity become recognized as such? The example of slavery suggests it is when a consensus forms around the arguments and eloquence that only an exceptionally gifted humanitarian can provide.

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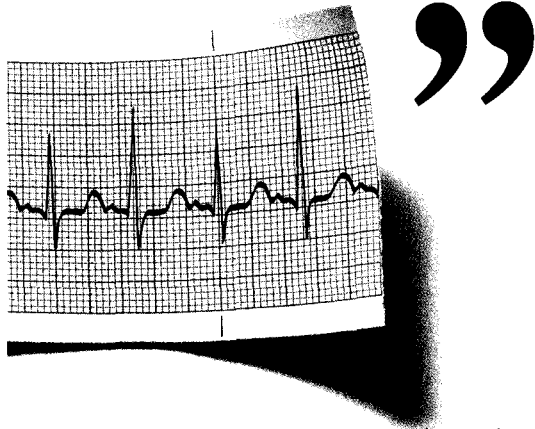
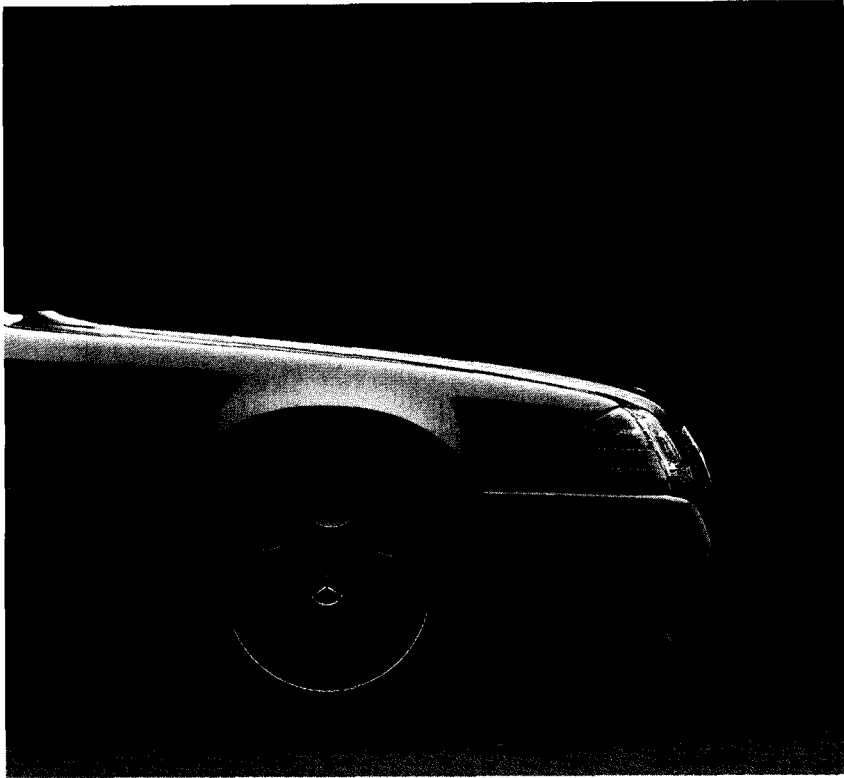
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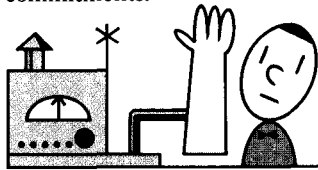


Sacrifice nothing.

THE MARCH ALMANAC

GOVERNMENT

This month the federal government is expected to hit the \$4.15 trillion debt ceiling established in the 1990 budget agreement. Two days in particular should assure this: the first and last of the month. On each of these the Treasury Department is scheduled to issue approximately \$25 billion in notes and redeem approximately \$12 billion worth, upping the debt by about \$13 billion each time. In addition, March is typically a costly month for the Treasury Department because people anticipating tax refunds from the Internal Revenue Service tend to file their returns early, while those who owe money generally wait until April to make their payments. Congress has adjusted the debt ceiling 86 times since 1940 and will surely follow suit this month: failure to do so would soon bring a halt to Social Security checks and interest payments to federal creditors—two of the government's most sacred financial commitments.

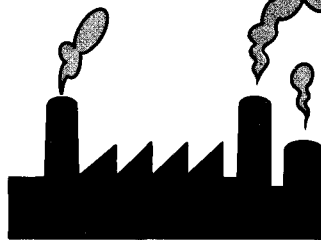


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ENVIRONMENT

March 29, the Chicago Board of Trade conducts the nation's first public auction of air-pollution futures. Interested parties—primarily electric utilities with coal-burning plants—have submitted sealed bids for emissions allowances, each of which permits the holder to vent one ton of sulfur dioxide (SO₂), a principal contributor to acid rain, into the atmosphere. Be-

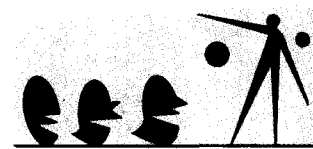


ginning in 1995 the 110 largest power plants must have allowances or pay \$2,000 a ton for the SO₂ they produce. The Environmental Protection Agency will distribute among them some 6 million allowances a year, holding others in reserve for auction annually; this year's auction represents an advance sale of 150,000. Utilities with excess allowances can offer them at auction, trade or sell them privately, or bank them for future use. By the year 2000 most plants will be subject to the pollution-allowance regulation, mandated by the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990. The auctions are meant to establish a market price for the allowances and to ensure that some will be left for new plants. Rich environmentalists can also bid in the auctions, to force power plants to begin cleaning up their act sooner.

HEALTH & SAFETY

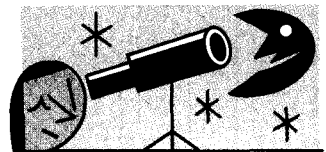
March 16, "Match Day": the 27,459 medical-school students and graduates participating in this year's National Resident Matching Program receive their assignments for post-graduate training (or word that they have failed to "match"). Assignments are made by computer, according to each applicant's and hospital's preferences. This year some 8,000 applicants are graduates of foreign medical schools—a 43 percent increase since last year. There are several reasons for this ballooning foreign interest. More residency programs now require all applicants to take part in the

Match (in past years foreign-trained graduates often simply applied to hospitals for positions left over after Match Day). Also, recent changes in immigration legislation have made it easier for foreign-born doctors to remain in the United States after completing residencies here. And as of next year foreign-trained applicants will be required to take the same rigorous qualifying exam as U.S. students, causing a surge in applicants this year. Still, the influx of foreign-trained graduates may not appreciably affect most other applicants: the former tend to fill positions in primary-care specialties—family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics—which are less popular with U.S.-trained applicants.



ARTS & LETTERS

March has in recent years become a prime time for unveiling Broadway shows: three quarters of the year's offerings will open this month and next. For most of Broadway's history the main season was the fall, perhaps because it coincided with residents' return to the city after summering elsewhere. One reason for the shift is the growing influence of the Tony Awards: producers are increasingly aiming for openings shortly in advance of the Tonys' May 5 deadline, in the hope that their plays and musicals will be fresh in nominators'—and judges'—minds. Producers are also cognizant that even a nomination for a Tony can swell the revenues of a show that is still running. Last June, for example, viewers phoned in orders during the two-hour Tony telecast for some \$12,000 worth of tickets for the musical *Falsettos*, a scene from which was featured in the awards ceremony.

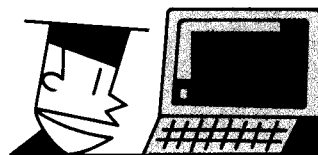


THE SKIES

March 3, Mars lies just north of the waxing Moon. 8, Full Moon, also known this month as the Sap, Crow, Awakening, or Chaste Moon. 9, Jupiter, which will be visible all night long each night for the rest of the month, lies just north of the waning Moon. 20, at 9:41 A.M. EST, the Vernal Equinox: spring begins.

100 YEARS AGO

H. C. Merwin, writing in the March, 1893, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "The old man will have learned to sympathize equally with the saint on his pillar and with the drunkard in the gutter. Something tells him that, if he had fostered certain impulses in early life, he too might have been, if not a saint, at least a good man. On the other hand, looking back upon some dark passages in his career, or looking down upon certain dark spots in his heart, known probably only to himself, he may even perceive, not without a shudder, that his present comparative immunity from vice is a matter of good fortune rather than of conscience and principle. To apprehend how the same temperament, differently balanced, renders one man a devotee, another a sensualist; to detect, sometimes, a fearful correspondence of impulses between the two; to realize that one person leads a blameless life through absolute defects of mind and character, whereas another falls a victim to his own good qualities,—all this is the privilege of old age."



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REPORTS & COMMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH

Unprotected Children

The United States has helped teach developing countries how to avoid needless epidemics of childhood diseases—but has ignored those lessons at home

THE CIVIL WAR in El Salvador stopped for a day on February 3, 1985, when soldiers on both sides of a struggle that would eventually kill 75,000 people declared a "day of tranquillity" to help vaccinate the country's children. On that Sunday and two others later in the year, soldiers worked with UNICEF, the International Red Cross, and other health organizations to immunize a quarter of a million children against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, and other childhood diseases.

The cease-fire in El Salvador was one event in the first year of an ambitious campaign to vaccinate children in scores of developing countries. American leaders helped launch the effort and keep it going; the federal government contributed \$329 million, and Rotary International and other private organizations raised hundreds of millions more. Public-health experts from the United States, many of them veterans of the successful battle to eliminate smallpox worldwide, advised officials in the various countries on how to reach children in remote villages and how to keep records so that babies could be given correct future doses. The goal was to vaccinate children

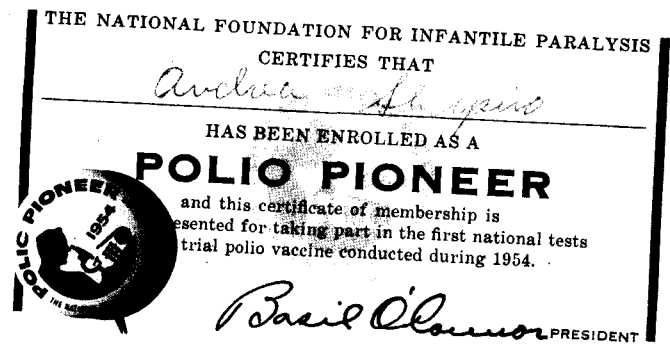
before their first birthday, since most childhood diseases kill and cripple mainly the very young. Twenty percent of babies in developing countries were immunized when the campaign began. After five years the World Health Organization estimated that despite wars, supply problems, and internal disagreements, 80 percent were protected.

By chance, 1985 was also a turning point for immunization efforts in the United States. It was the year the government decided to stop trying to find out how many children were being vaccinated. The United States Immunization Survey for that year indicated that fewer than two thirds of children under five were fully vaccinated, a drop from previous years. Some people speculated that the Reagan Administration stopped counting because it wanted to hide the bad news.

Five years later, just when the international campaign was reporting success, the United States was in the midst of a three-year measles epidemic that infected 55,000 people, put 11,260 in the hospital, and killed more than 150. Communities that had not seen a case of measles for years set aside hospital beds for children dehydrated from high fevers or congested with measles pneumonia, as the outbreak spread to forty-nine states. Cases of other preventable childhood diseases also increased. The

number of people with German measles tripled from 1989 to 1990, and whooping-cough cases increased by 17 percent.

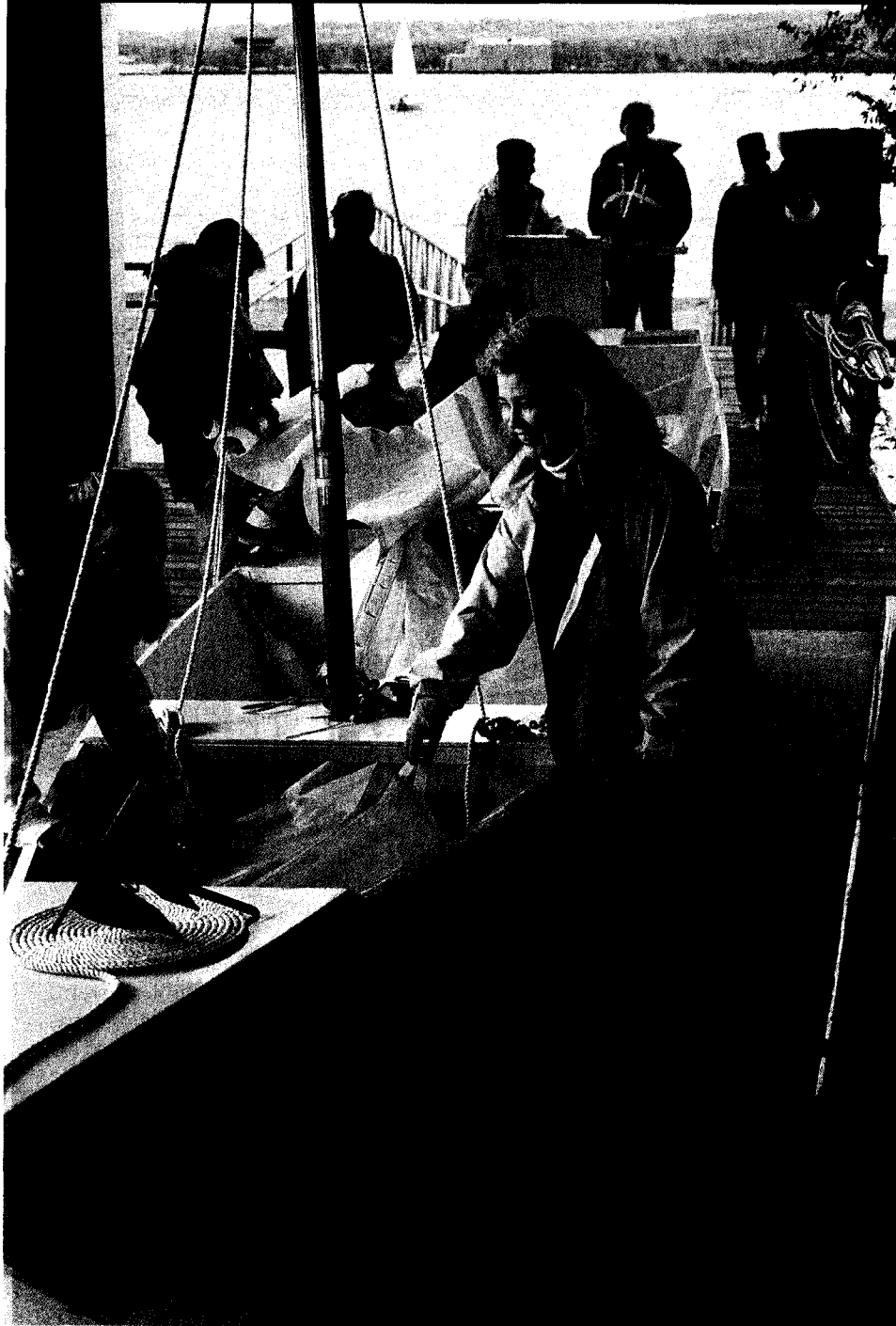
As a public-health failure, the measles epidemic was particularly frustrating. The disease had been nearly beaten a few years before. During the Carter Administration federal officials had set a goal of eliminating measles altogether by 1982, and an all-time low of 1,497 cases was recorded in 1983. In previous measles epidemics scientists at the Centers for Disease Control, in Atlanta, had found that most of the people who got sick were school-age children or young adults; by 1980 state laws requiring vaccination as a condition for school entry protected most older children. This epi-



A badge for the first mass trials of Jonas Salk's polio vaccine, in 1954

demic was different. It struck mainly unvaccinated young children. Speaking at the CDC's annual immunization conference in 1991, James O. Mason, M.D., the assistant secretary for health, explained why diseases long conquered by vaccines still flourish. "The reason measles is still a world scourge and on the front page in the United States—and not in the history books,

Mrs. Johnston's Science Class: Just Add Water.



It's that easy, thanks to a 31-foot, two-masted Bolger Gloucester schooner these students built themselves.

The project is the brainchild of Therese Johnston, a science teacher at George Washington Junior High in Alexandria, Virginia.

"I wanted to involve them in something that extended beyond the classroom," explains Therese, "something that would be meaningful throughout their lives."

That's why the building of the boat is just the beginning. These students, thanks to their conservation-minded teacher, are passionate about protecting and preserving the environment. Their goal is to use the schooner to study the effects of pollution on the nearby Potomac River.

"This project has really empowered my students," says Therese. "They believe that they can effect change, that they can make the world a better place."

For helping launch her students into a lifelong fascination with science, State Farm is proud to present Therese Johnston with our Good Neighbor Award, along with a \$5,000 contribution to her school.



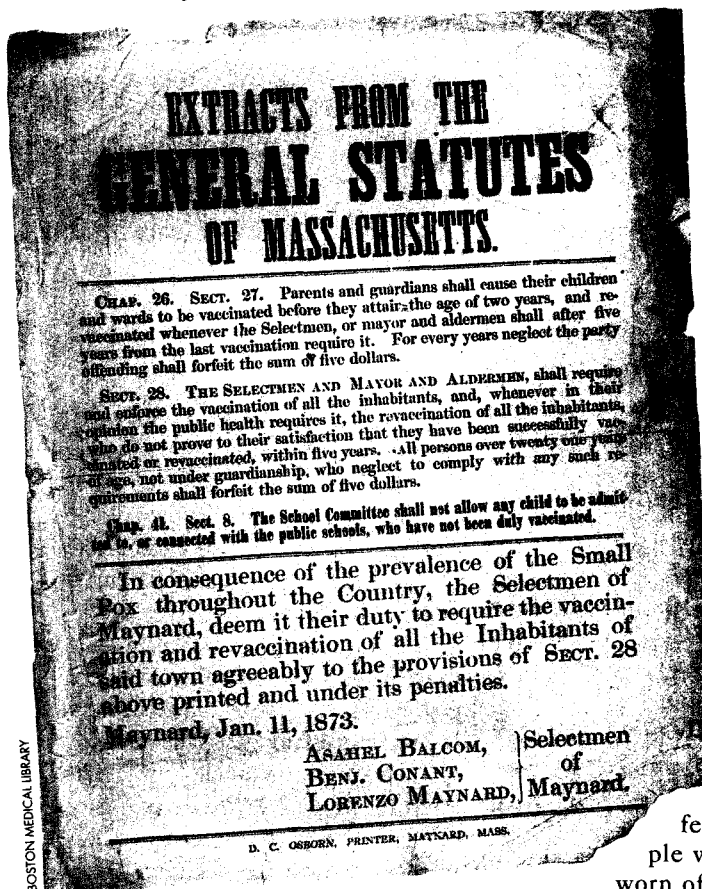
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An 1873 broadside announcing compulsory smallpox vaccination for all citizens



like smallpox . . . is that we have failed to vaccinate pre-school children."

The explanation commonly given for this failure is that low-income families are hard to reach. The reasoning behind this view is that vaccination is a parent's responsibility, that low-income parents don't know or don't care about it, and that epidemics spread because inner-city children are not vaccinated. Once it is labeled an inner-city problem, immunization tends to get boxed and shelved alongside many others.

The first overview of vaccination rates since 1985, when the U.S. Immunization Survey was canceled, was recently compiled by the CDC. It does deliver bad news. It also shows that immunization is not only an inner-city problem, and that low-income parents do try to get their children vaccinated: almost all children (90 percent) were brought to the doctor for at least one dose of vaccine.

In an effort to find out why the measles epidemic occurred, scientists from the CDC asked state health officials to look at how many two-year-olds had received the three basic vaccines:

DTP (a diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough combination), MMR (a measles, mumps, and rubella combination), and polio. In virtually every state, officials have found, vaccination levels are too low to prevent the spread of epidemics. When more than 80 to 90 percent of people in a community are fully vaccinated (the percent varies with each disease), "herd immunity" protects those who are not immune—babies too young to be vaccinated, young children who have missed vaccinations or whose vaccinations were not effective, and older people whose immunity has worn off. Below that level, contact between people who are sick and people who lack immunity is frequent enough to cause epidemics.

Thirty-eight states report that fewer than two thirds of two-year-olds have received the recommended doses. The median vaccination rate for all states reporting is only 56 percent. Forty-eight percent of two-year-olds in California, 44 percent in Missouri, 49 percent in Arizona and Florida, and 36 percent in Utah have received all their shots. Despite efforts in the 1970s and 1980s by Governors Dale Bumpers, David Pryor, and Bill Clinton, only 42 percent of two-year-olds in Arkansas are fully protected. Progressive Washington State hasn't done much better (51 percent). The rates in some big cities are frighteningly low—18 percent in Houston and 38 percent in New York City, for example. Other surveys have shown that vaccination rates in rural areas could be lower than those in inner cities. The lowest rate in the Washington, D.C., area—35 percent—was in the rolling hills of Virginia hunt country.

These surveys have one big limitation: in the absence of a national system for tracking vaccination rates, state

officials collect information that is already three years out of date, looking back at immunization records of children entering kindergarten. The sad fact is that no one knows how many two-year-olds today are vulnerable to disease.

Behind these findings are two fundamental problems. First, we do not now have—nor have we ever had—a national approach to vaccinating young children. In that lack we are virtually alone among industrialized countries. Second, during the past ten years skyrocketing prices for vaccinations, reduced staff and hours at public clinics, and recommendations that new vaccines be given have made it harder, not easier, for young children to get vaccinations. Many middle-income children, as well as many lower-income children, are now lacking that protection.

Why does the country that has led the world in the discovery and development of miraculous vaccines, and that spends more on health care than any other, fail to give its young children the simplest, most effective protection against disease? How can we be so good at teaching critical lessons about preventing needless epidemics to people in developing countries and ignore those lessons at home? The answers to these questions matter not only because 168,000 people, mostly children, became ill with vaccine-preventable diseases from 1981 to 1990 but also because we have again set optimistic national goals—to immunize 90 percent of young children by the year 2000 and to eliminate measles entirely. Clues about past failures might help to answer the question that troubles government officials who are launching a national campaign to reach these goals: Is there any reason to think that today's efforts will be any more successful than those of the past?

THE HISTORY of national efforts to immunize young children is a story of enthusiastic campaigns followed by apparent lapses of memory. During the last such campaign, begun in 1977, the Carter Administration pledged to immunize 90 percent of children by 1979. As a first step the government asked states to enact and enforce laws requiring immunization for school entry. All complied. The hope was to follow this



catch-up measure with a policy for vaccinating babies before age two—the age by which, public-health authorities around the world have long agreed, basic shots must be completed to be effective. Epidemics spread quickly among young children, and diseases like whooping cough and measles, which may not be serious in later life, can kill the very young.

Intended as a first step, late vaccination became a habit. The need to vaccinate young children was forgotten when Reagan Administration budget-cutters surveyed health programs in 1981 and 1982, saw declining rates of preventable diseases, and proposed cuts in immunization funding and other public-health programs. State and local governments focused their limited resources on compliance with school-entry laws, and parents learned to identify vaccination with the start of kindergarten. "That's too late," argues Kenneth J. Bart, M.D., the director of the federal National Vaccine Program Office. "The epidemics occur in preschool-age children."

When measles cases climbed from 3,396 in 1988 to 18,193 in 1989, the promise to vaccinate young children had been made annually for at least twenty-five years. Fifty states approached the task in fifty different ways. The federal government played a supporting role by funding research, licensing vaccines, stockpiling them in case of shortages, paying for about half the doses used in public clinics, and responding to outbreaks of disease. The four companies that made vaccines sold them at a reduced price to federal and state governments for use in public clinics, subsidizing that low rate by charging private pediatricians, clinics, and hospitals two or three times as much.

Public-health authorities now agree that the idea that parents are to blame for low vaccination rates is wrong. A better explanation begins with the huge increase in the price of vaccinations. Vaccines used to cost pennies. In 1977 the retail price to a doctor of a single dose of DTP vaccine was nineteen cents, and the price of all the kinds of vaccines needed for full immunization was about \$11. By last year the price of the vaccines needed to immunize a child fully had soared to \$230. Including doctors' fees, which frequently account for half the cost of vaccination,

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SEASON PREVIEW

North America's film festivals

FILMFEST D.C. *Washington, D.C.* *April 21-May 2*

Over the past six years, Filmfest D.C. has presented the Washington premieres of hundreds of international films. Focusing each year on one area of the world, the festival attempts to educate Washingtonians about far-flung cultures. In 1988, Filmfest D.C. presented the largest showing of African cinema ever seen in America. This year's festival will concentrate on films from Australia. Other highlights include screenings of new prints of classic early Hitchcock films, the presentation of the Rosebud Award to an up-and-coming Washington filmmaker, and a program on music films entitled "Global Rhythms." For tickets (on sale April 9): (703) 218-6500. For more information: Washington D.C. International Film Festival, Box 21396, Washington, D.C. 20009; (202) 727-2396.

AFI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL *Los Angeles, California* *June 10-24*

Although its home is the hub of the U.S. filmmaking industry, the American Film Institute's festival has maintained a consistently international focus. Since its inception, seven years ago, festival-goers in L.A. have been treated to a diverse sampling of the world's cinema. Focusing primarily on films by lesser-known directors, the festival also includes tributes, seminars, retrospectives, and audience forums with filmmakers. Last year's program included broad studies of the work of François Truffaut, Stefan Jarl, Mike Leigh, and Manoel de Oliveira. For tickets (on sale 10 days before the fes-



tival): (213) 466-1767. For more information: AFI Exhibitions, 2021 North Western Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7707.

TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL *Toronto, Ontario* *September 9-18*

Toronto's Festival of Festivals is the largest film festival in North America. Last year, close to a quarter of a million people viewed nearly 300 films from 40 countries on 13 screens. Praised as one of the best-organized, best-programmed events of the festival season, the showcase has consistently received accolades throughout its 17-year existence. Toronto's festival offers a wide range of carefully chosen contemporary North American and international works. Annual events include film retrospectives, a business conference, and awards in such categories as Best Canadian Feature Film and Best First Feature Film. For more information and tickets: Toronto International Film Festival, 70 Carlton Street, Toronto, ONT M5B 1L7; (416) 967-7371.

BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL *Boston, Massachusetts* *September 13-21*

Boston will hold its ninth annual film festival this fall. The festival features domestic and foreign films (many before public release), independent films and short features from film students and first-time filmmakers. Annual events include a gala opening night, an independent-filmmaker symposium, and the presentation of the Piper Heidsieck Award for Outstanding Achievement. Past winners have included Jodie Foster, Susan Sarandon, and Al Pacino. For more information: The 9th Annual Boston Film Festival, 400 Plaza Drive, Secaucus, NJ 07094; (201) 319-1111.

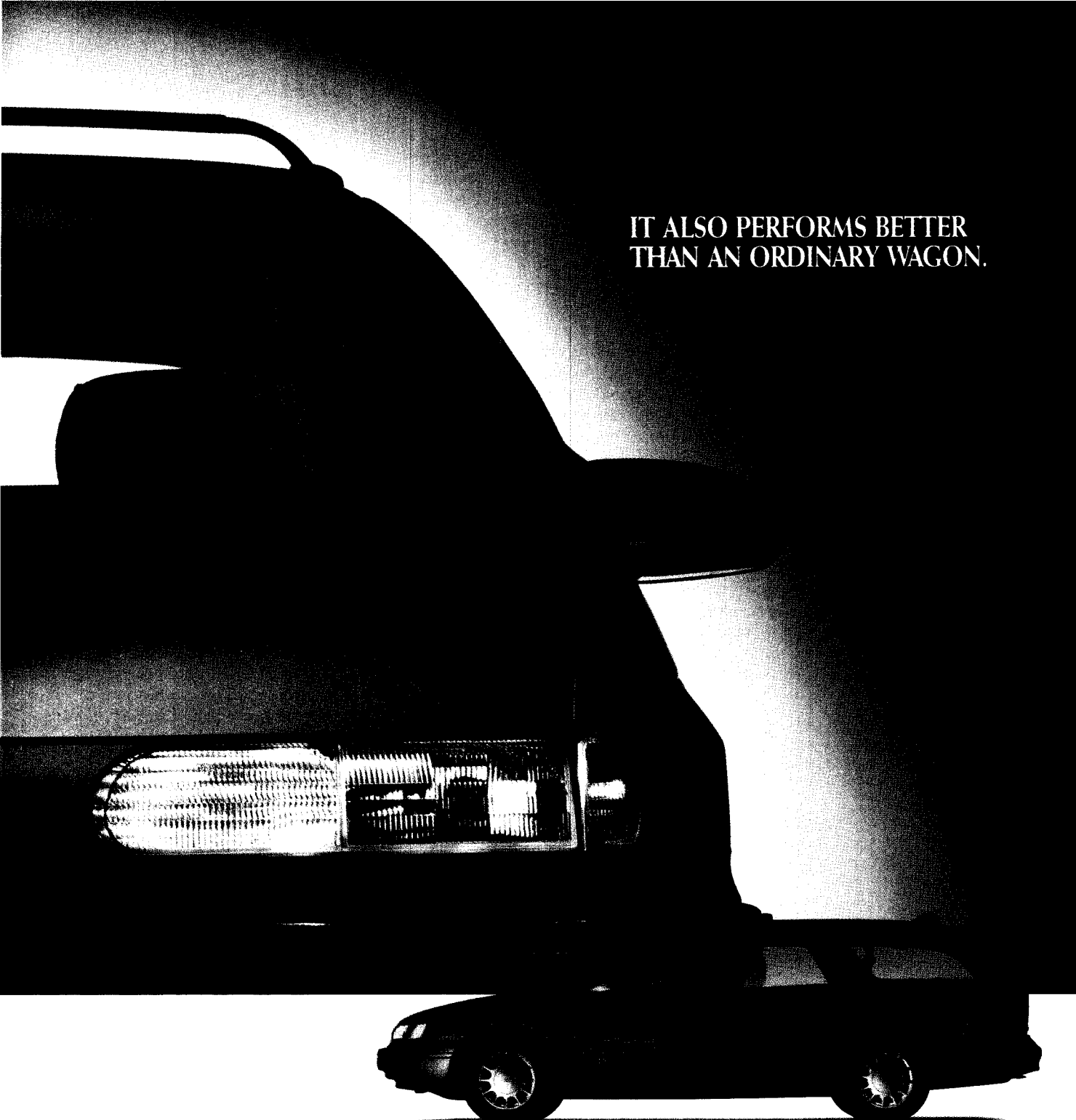
NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL *New York, New York* *October 1-17*

The Film Society of Lincoln Center has sponsored New York's film festival since its inception, in 1969. Films are shown at the Center's Avery Fisher and Alice Tully halls; special showings

will take place at the state-of-the-art Walter Reade Theater, which opened in 1991. The festival has in the past presented the premieres of many critically acclaimed films by filmmakers such as Jean-Luc Godard, Akira Kurosawa, and Martin Scorsese. Last year the festival introduced a new feature, Videorama, which showcases the works of pioneers in the field of video. Annual events include a retrospective of a filmmaker's works. Tickets go on sale the weekend after Labor Day. For more information and tickets: Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023; (212) 875-5050.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL *Denver, Colorado* *October 14-21*

Colorado has produced more than its share of top-quality film festivals over the years, but the longest-running and most popular of the Rocky Mountain State's offerings takes place in downtown Denver. Featuring black-tie receptions, live television coverage, and scores of celebrity appearances, the festival has become one of Denver's most important cultural events of the year. Since 1977, the festival has truly offered something for everyone, from the best in new productions to classic films. More than 100 films are showcased on six screens each year. A special event each year is the presentation of the John Cassavetes Award for independent filmmaking. Tickets are usually available one to two weeks before the festival. For more information: Denver International Film Society, 999 18th Street, Suite 1820, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 298-8223.



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the amount paid by a family to immunize one child was about \$460.

Vaccines are still inexpensive to make and are still cheap for international organizations, which buy large quantities. UNICEF buys polio vaccine from manufacturers around the world for roughly six cents a dose. The U.S. government pays Lederle-Praxis, the sole U. S. supplier of oral polio vaccine, \$2.09 a dose; private doctors pay \$9.91 a dose. Developing countries vaccinate children for fewer diseases, and many of those countries require less-rigorous safety and effectiveness measures. Nonetheless, the fact is that UNICEF and WHO can immunize a child for about \$15, including transportation and distribution costs.

In most other countries vaccines are offered to children free of charge or are subsidized by the government. Here vaccination is an out-of-pocket expense for most families using private doctors, competing with the week's groceries and the month's car payment. Health-insurance plans willingly pay the thousands of dollars it costs to hos-

pitalize a child with measles pneumonia, but most do not cover immunization, and more are dropping out as insurers and employers pare down benefits.

1982. Hundreds of families sued manufacturers, claiming damages for alleged vaccine-related injuries. Lederle, at the time the only commercial supplier of DTP vaccine, told a congressional hearing that its potential liability was more than 200 times its annual sales. The price the government paid for DTP vaccine increased 2,000 percent in three years, and prices of other vaccines doubled. Congress responded to industry fears by passing a law to protect manufacturers and doctors from lawsuits, and by adding a large excise tax to the price of vaccines to finance a no-fault compensation program for children injured by vaccines. For DTP the excise tax is more than double the price the government pays for the vaccine itself.

The scare had some good results. A serious inquiry into side effects found that vaccines were safer than many medicines, but also indicated that the risks were real. A small number of children can suffer seizures or other serious reactions. Congress now requires doctors to alert families to possible side effects. Scientists have developed a safer whooping-cough vaccine, now used in the fourth and fifth doses.

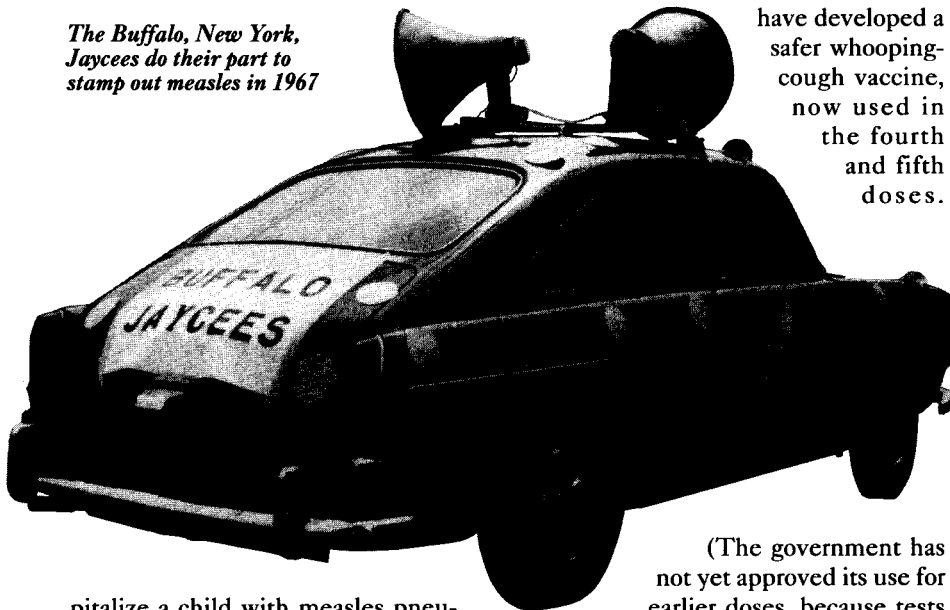
for measles, mumps, and rubella, raised its price six percent at the height of the measles epidemic—shortly after the government had doubled the market for the vaccine by recommending a second dose at eleven to twelve years of age. “We reduced the public-sector price by at least as much,” says Gordon Douglas, M.D., the president of Merck’s vaccine division, “and we haven’t raised the price since. But in retrospect the six percent increase was a mistake.”

The quickened march of medical progress also made vaccination more complicated. In 1973 children were supposed to receive eight doses of three vaccines—DTP, polio, and MMR. For the next sixteen years the only change was the addition of one dose of vaccine—for *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, which can cause bacterial meningitis. Then, from 1990 to 1992, the government and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended five or six new doses—three for hepatitis B, and two or three for *Haemophilus influenzae* type b. The current schedule calls for each child to receive fourteen or fifteen doses of various vaccines, given at birth, two months, four months, six months, and fifteen to eighteen months of age. Scientists are working to develop combination vaccines in order to reduce the number of separate doses needed; a vaccine to protect against six diseases may be available within five years.

Finding vaccinations at a doctor’s office prohibitively expensive, increasing numbers of families tried to get their children inoculated at public clinics. But if vaccinations at pediatricians’ offices were rationed by price, vaccinations at public clinics proved to be rationed by inconvenience. A 1990 survey by the CDC found that almost all public clinics required appointments for immunizations, and about half required complete physical exams and physician referrals. Most were understaffed, and many charged patients an administration fee.

Bush Administration officials recognized these problems, and tried to resolve some of them. They agreed that action on immunization could not await the outcome of the national debate on health-care reform. New national standards call for “express lane” immunizations at public clinics, eliminating appointments, referrals, and complete physicals, although funding for these

The Buffalo, New York, Jaycees do their part to stamp out measles in 1967



(The government has not yet approved its use for earlier doses, because tests of its safety for younger children are not complete.)

But prices have never come back down. Most vaccines are produced by a single commercial supplier, leaving a company free to price as it pleases. Doctors’ fees for vaccination, like other health-care costs, have risen seven to nine percent a year. Public-health officials and members of Congress were especially annoyed when Merck, Sharp & Dohme, the sole supplier of the vaccine

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changes is problematic. Federal immunization grants to help pay for vaccines used in public clinics have increased from \$123 million in 1989 to \$259 million in 1992 (this mostly covers only higher prices and new kinds of vaccines), and for the first time Congress has added a token amount of funding to help deliver vaccines to children. An attempt has also been made to coordinate the activities of the various agencies involved. Once again, though, nothing has been done to make vaccination systematically cheap and convenient, as it is in other countries.

IF PAST experience is a guide, it is about time for the current immunization campaign to give way to national amnesia, to be followed in a few years by another epidemic. Twenty-five years of promises and no action suggests that the real obstacle may be a lingering notion that immunization is not a national responsibility. The traditions of American medicine "embody a strong and continuing suspicion of government, the relative neglect of public health, and a powerful role for the private sector as a source of services and as an occasion for considerable profit," Daniel Callahan, the director of the Hastings Center, a respected research institute that examines the government's role in health care, writes in his book *What Kind of Life*.

In this instance the arguments for leaving tradition behind are compelling. When more than a million people in this country get on planes every day, epidemics are no longer local events. The rapid spread of measles to forty-nine states was a destructive reminder that from the perspective of a virus we have become one community.

No one disputes that immunization is a good investment. Next to clean water, immunization is modern society's least costly, most beneficial health measure. "I know of nothing else in the total budget that has a payback of ten or fifteen to one in dollars," Senator Dale Bumpers told the 1991 CDC immunization conference. Infectious diseases have not been conquered. In fact, they may be more of a threat now than in the past. The spread of Lyme disease, new strains of tuberculosis, and AIDS is a sign that evolving microbes thrive on the trade, travel, crowding, and complacency of modern society, according to a report last fall by the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine.

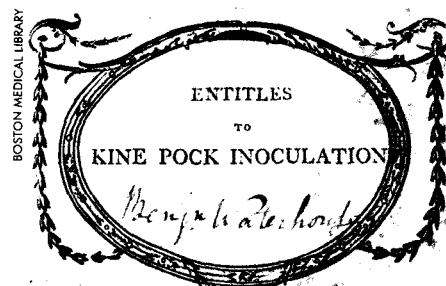
The real choice is whether to pay now or later. Paying later, as we do, is much more expensive. The costs of fighting epidemics are shared widely in lost work and school days, hospital bills, travel restrictions, government intervention, and long-term care for people left impaired by disease. Of course, the ultimate money-saver is to wipe out disease altogether. Shortly after the world's last case of smallpox occurred, in 1977, the costs of smallpox vaccination dropped to zero.

THE QUESTION facing the Clinton Administration is whether promises to immunize young children can be translated into actions that prevent future epidemics. Those looking to break past patterns will find plenty of ideas to draw on. Driven by the urgency of recurring diseases and dropping vaccination rates, several states have begun to make fundamental changes in their immunization practices. In 1990 Washington State started buying vaccine from the CDC at the low government price and distributing it free to private doctors and public clinics. Ten other states have adopted some form of bulk purchase of vaccines, and half a dozen more are considering it. Massachusetts and Michigan go further and manufacture some of their own vaccines. But there are limits to what individual states can do. Lederle has turned down recent requests by other states to make bulk-purchase arrangements, Merck also opposes such programs, and Washington State's bulk-purchase program may be threatened by budget cuts.

The change of Administrations has awakened interest in expanding these experiments into a national program financed by federal and state governments. State health officers favor the idea, the March of Dimes and the Children's Defense Fund have made it a priority, and Senator Edward M. Kennedy, the chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, is developing legislation for "universal immunization." One way such a program could work is

for the federal government to negotiate with manufacturers to buy the vaccines needed each year, just as the Pentagon procures tanks (and vaccines, for that matter). Manufacturers, who already maintain a distribution system, could then deliver them to all doctors, clinics, and hospitals. Federal and state governments would share the cost of giving the vaccines to children. Buying all necessary vaccines could cost the government an additional \$500 million a year, the price of a couple of B-1 bombers. In one step universal immunization would remove financial barriers and make vaccination more convenient. Any child could get vaccinated by any doctor or nurse, giving uninsured families and Medicaid-eligible families easier access to private doctors. The idea, however, is vigorously opposed by manufacturers. "It would transfer costs from the private sector to the public sector at a time when the deficit is critical," argues Gordon Douglas, of Merck's vaccine division, "and there's no evidence that it would improve immunization rates. There is no problem with the price of vaccines at public clinics. The real problems are things like short hours and not enough staff."

More-moderate proposals for making vaccination cheap and convenient have also gathered support. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Vaccine Advisory Committee, a broad-based group that makes recommendations to the government, have suggested that all insurers be required to include immunizations in their basic benefits package, and that the shortcomings of Medicaid be remedied by telling families how to register eligible children and by raising reimbursements. One third of all children under six are currently eligible for Medicaid under new laws, but many of them are not yet enrolled in the program. The weakness in these plans is that they leave out growing numbers of families who are neither insured nor eligible for Medicaid—a problem that could be solved by instituting a nation-



A free pass given by Benjamin Waterhouse, who in 1800 introduced the smallpox vaccine into America



al insurance plan as part of overall health-care reform.

The important point on which people in industry and government agree is the need to devise a way to tell parents, doctors, and policy-makers which doses of vaccine children have had and which they have not, no matter where they show up for shots. "With fourteen or fifteen doses of vaccine for nine diseases, it is unreasonable to expect parents to remember when to take children in for vaccinations without assistance," says Walter Orenstein, M.D., the director of immunization at the CDC. "Right now we don't know how many children are adequately vaccinated." The leading idea is to build a computer-based network that would allow any doctor to call up instantly any child's immunization record, just as law-enforcement officers now call up any driver's record. Several versions of this idea are being tried in demonstration projects.

Ideally, lean times help sort out critical tasks from projects that can wait. Before investing \$30 billion in advanced robotics, magnetic-levitation trains, and fiber-optic communications, as the Clinton Administration may do, it is worth pausing to consider the benefits of an investment in the simplest, lowest-technology, most cost-effective form of health care. Empowered by advances in biotechnology, scientists may be able to develop effective vaccines for pneumonia, chicken pox, various strains of influenza, and Lyme disease within five years, and the search for an AIDS vaccine continues. One genetically engineered vaccine, for hepatitis B, is already in use. "I have a vision that by 2025 or 2050 we could have a childhood free of infectious disease because of vaccines," says Kenneth Bart, of the National Vaccine Program, "and by the next century we may be able to go beyond infectious disease to chronic diseases, perhaps diabetes and some cancers."

If, however, one worries that today's campaign will be followed by tomorrow's memory lapse, another vision appears. "Wouldn't it be great if we had a vaccine for teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, or HIV?" asks David R. Smith, M.D., the health commissioner for the state of Texas, where the measles epidemic still lingers. "It wouldn't be enough. If we had it, we wouldn't be able to deliver it."

—Mary Graham

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Now, we won't waste your time explaining what "swaps" are and how they work. That would take an ad twice as long as this.

But we will tell you that the money we raise through such financial transactions is used to fund something critically important to us all—higher education in America.

Which is what Sallie Mae is all about.

Where the money comes from.

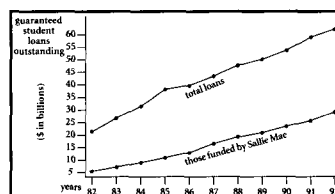
Okay, so what does all this complex financial stuff have to do with higher education, or,

to put it in even broader terms, post-secondary education?

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And, in over a third of the cases, the source of that private

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At Sallie Mae, we use all the financial savvy available—like using the “swaps” shown here—to provide money for higher education.

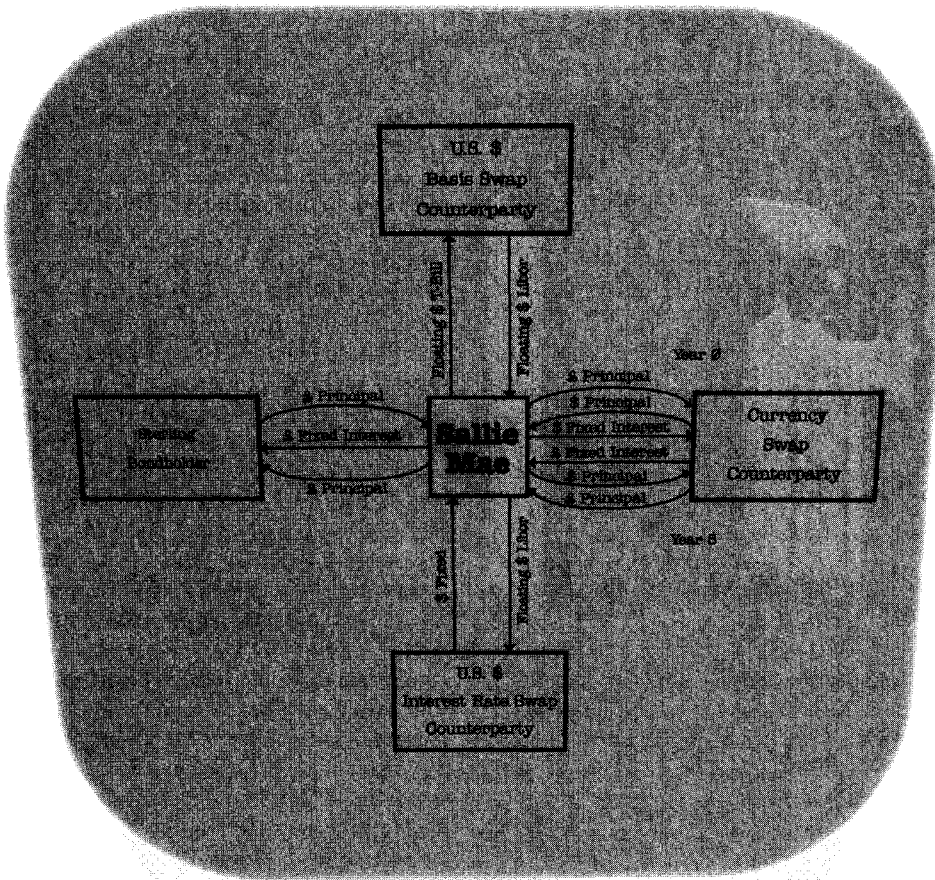
Which, in turn, makes it possible for students to get education loans whenever they need them.

Where the money goes.

We don't lend directly to students or parents. But they do benefit directly.

Working with banks, state higher education authorities, guarantors, and schools, we financed some \$9 billion of the \$80 billion students and their families paid for higher education in 1991-92.

Most of our financing is for student loans. But we also



provide funds for loans to parents who are putting their children through college. And Health Education Assistance Loans for prospective health care professionals.

Even people who tap into their home equity or take out personal loans for college may be using funds provided by Sallie Mae.

All told, more than 6.5 million borrowers rely on Sallie Mae for loans to finance every kind of education. At schools all across the country.

Some students need money for just one or two semesters.

Some are going to trade school.

Some are getting their master's or doctoral degrees.

Post-Secondary Education Costs Borne By Students And Families In 1991-92

- \$80 billion total
- \$9 billion through Sallie Mae

And others are learning new workplace skills at their community college.

Sallie Mae also helps schools. Some 200 colleges in 38 states have received nearly \$2.5 billion for the construction or renovation of buildings, research labs, libraries, and classrooms. And to purchase essential teaching tools like computers, telescopes, even pianos.

With so many people and institutions depending on us for funds, we employ some of the best

financial talent in the world.

How the money is made.

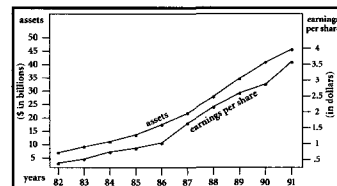
It doesn't take a Ph.D. in finance to know that money doesn't grow on trees. But money does grow. And few companies have been growing it as intelligently and prudently as ours.

We have nearly \$50 billion in assets.

We're one of just a handful of financial services companies in the country to have a AAA balance sheet.

And through sound, conservative balance sheet management and marketplace innovation, we consistently generate returns that keep private capital flowing in, no matter what kind of economic conditions prevail.

All of which attracts some of the smartest private capital investors in the world to invest in Sallie Mae.

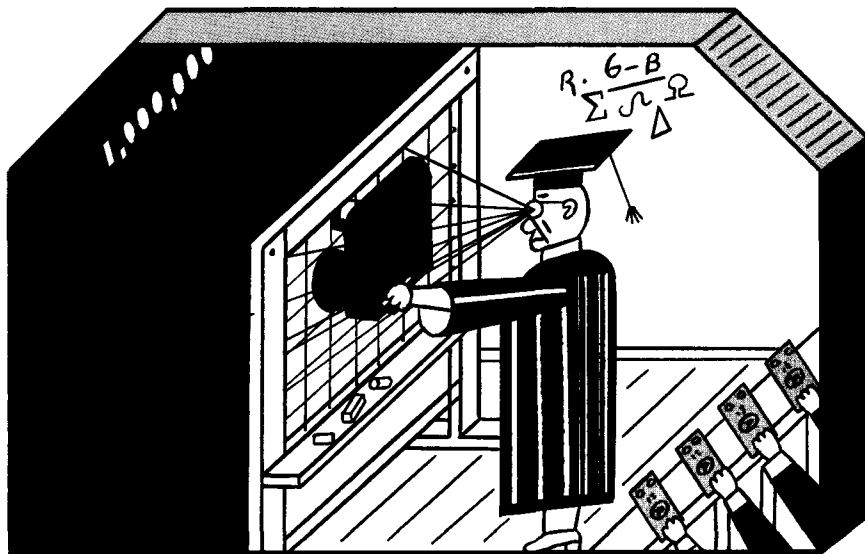


Sallie Mae's consistent performance fuels investing which in turn supports more student credit

And that money finances higher education right here. In America.

No matter what America's future education finance needs will be, Sallie Mae will continue to focus the full power of private capital markets on meeting them.

SallieMae
A New York Stock Exchange Company.



EDUCATION

Why College Tuitions Are So High

Not inflation, not enrollment decline, but the subsidization of corporate research is largely to blame

OVER THE PAST two years numerous articles have appeared in the national press about the "fiscal agony" that American colleges and universities are experiencing. A front-page article in *The New York Times* in February of last year announced, "BAD TIMES FORCE UNIVERSITIES TO RETHINK WHAT THEY ARE." Two months later *Time* magazine ran a cover story warning that administrators are facing a "cost crunch that, recession or no, promises only to grow worse." Other articles have addressed how this crisis affects students. *The Miami Herald*, for example, pointed out last August, "COSTS PUT A DREAM AT RISK."

Although it's true that the downturn in the economy forced U.S. colleges to make drastic cutbacks, students began leaving college—or began to choose schools on the basis of cost rather than quality—well before the recession hit. Since the mid-1980s escalating tuition costs have forced low-income students into community colleges or out of school altogether, and have either pushed mid-

dle-class students into state schools or saddled them with unparalleled debt. Considering that higher education is a primary source of social and economic mobility, this is cause for alarm—especially since tuitions are expected to continue to mount. Tuition and fees now come to more than \$20,000 a year at elite private institutions, and the price could jump as high as \$40,000 by the year 2000.

Most of the recent articles have alluded to the fact that since 1980 colleges and universities have been increasing their tuition and fees at roughly twice the rate of inflation. None of them, however, has explained why.

Three years ago the higher-education establishment itself attempted to explain the increases. In the late 1980s the American Council on Education, a premier higher-education umbrella organization, and the College Board, the publisher of the annual listing of college costs and the sponsor of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, commissioned Arthur Hauptman, a consultant to both organizations, to account for the unprecedented tuition increases. In April of 1990, after a two-year investigation, they released the results.

The report, a 120-page book called *The College Tuition Spiral*, claims that, essentially, tuitions increased at public colleges because state funding dropped, at private colleges because facilities had been improved and teachers' salaries raised, and at both types of schools because they had to compete for a shrinking pool of college-age youths. "Institutions decided to compete for students through nicer facilities and better

services rather than by lowering their prices," Hauptman has said. "That's not a venal decision." A headline in *USA Today* was typical of the largely uncritical press treatment the report received: "TUITION HIKES ARE JUSTIFIED, COLLEGES SAY." Associations and schools affiliated with the American Council on Education embraced the study's conclusions as the official answer. And in November of that year the Department of Education released "The Escalating Costs of Higher Education," a report that included a section supporting Hauptman's core findings. Upon close examination, however, the three major factors that Hauptman identified fail to explain why the price of a college diploma has risen so high so fast.

His first assertion, that a downturn in state funding forced public schools to raise tuition, isn't even supported by his own data, which, he states in another section of the report, "do not suggest a slumping in state support for higher education in the 1980s."

Hauptman's second assertion is what some critics have called the Chivas Regal argument. It goes like this: An apparently more pervasive desire for a college education, coupled with a shrinking college-age population, convinced administrators that the way to woo prospective students was to raise faculty salaries, upgrade facilities and programs, and offer more student aid, rather than to cut costs and lower tuition.

"It's clear that what [colleges] spent this money on was not the quality of instruction," Hauptman says. Colleges decided to keep their most affluent "customers" satisfied by gentrifying their campuses and charging for it. As Hauptman says, it was "a good business decision" in a classic buyer's market. If schools didn't keep up with their competitors, matching them natatorium for natatorium, students wouldn't enroll.

Third, Hauptman contends that since private and public schools were faced with a declining pool of eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds, they could no longer spread their fixed costs over growing numbers of students, as they had in the 1960s and early 1970s. Thus they had to raise tuition. But in the 1980s the number of college students increased at a fairly steady rate. From 1980 to 1990 enrollments rose from 11.4 million to 13.6 million students—a gain of about 20 percent.

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Angela Mina lives in a very poor country where many children born die before their first birthday. Over 75% of all children suffer some form of malnutrition. Unclean water, disease, revolution, and natural disaster make survival for many children and their families a daily challenge.

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For over 55 years, *PLAN International has been in the field bringing its life-changing skills to communities throughout the world.*

To understand how Childreach and PLAN International impacted Angela's life, consider the things that *didn't* happen to her.

She never became ill with amoebic or bacillary dysentery. Using funds pooled from sponsorship money in the region, PLAN International's field staff typically aids communities like Angela's with equipment and expertise so that the people can create their own clean water supply.

She never developed pneumonia. Medicines and health care made possible by PLAN International in clinics supported by sponsor contributions kept Angela's bronchitis from escalating into a more serious bronchial ailment.

She never had to leave school. Despite severe poverty, Angela did not have to give up her schooling to go to work. Her Childreach

sponsor's continuing support made it possible for PLAN International to supply school uniforms and pay school fees that would have been impossible for Angela's father to afford.

Because of what didn't happen, here's what did happen. Angela became an excellent student, having finished high school with high marks. She is now eighteen, and has also graduated from the Childreach sponsorship program.

Through the civil unrest and natural disaster, through sickness and poverty, Angela believed she and her family would survive and have a better life. Her faith in her religion and her family, her friends at PLAN International, and a relationship with a family thousands of miles away has given her the hope and confidence that her dreams for tomorrow *will* come true.

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Age: ☐ 3-5 ☐ 6-8 ☐ 9-11 ☐ 12-14 ☐ Any Age

I'd like my child to be from:

☐ SOUTH AMERICA: ☐ Colombia ☐ Ecuador ☐ Bolivia

☐ CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN: ☐ Guatemala ☐ Honduras ☐ El Salvador

☐ Dominican Republic

☐ ASIA: ☐ Indonesia ☐ India ☐ Nepal ☐ Philippines ☐ Thailand

☐ AFRICA: ☐ Burkina Faso ☐ Egypt ☐ Togo ☐ Guinea

☐ Please send my New Sponsor Kit with my sponsored child's photo and case history.

My check for \$22 for the first month's sponsorship is enclosed.

☐ MAYBE. I'm interested in Childreach, but I'll need to know more before I make my decision. Please send me information on the child I'll be sponsoring.

☐ Although I can't sponsor right now, I'd like to contribute \$_____ to your Emergency Fund.

☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Miss ☐ Ms.

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CITY _____

STATE _____

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N331

Mail to: Childreach, 155 Plan Way
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Angela
in 1978.



Angela
in 1982.



Angela
in 1987.



Angela
in 1991.



The flattened-enrollment theory also doesn't explain what amounts to a five-year gap. Enrollments leveled off around 1975, and college officials were aware of demographic trends well before that time, but schools did not raise their tuitions significantly above the rate of inflation until 1980. Tuition actually lagged behind inflation in the late 1970s. Why did colleges and universities wait five years to increase their fees?

THE NATIONAL Coalition for Universities in the Public Interest, an organization co-founded by Ralph Nader in 1983, offers a compelling counterargument to Hauptman's report. It blames tuition inflation on the commercialization of campus-based research. Leonard Minsky, another of the coalition's founders, says that universities are raising tuitions "not to attract more students but to attract corporate investment."

It is a piece of federal legislation passed in 1980 that is to blame for the tuition increases, according to the coalition. The Bayh-Dole Act, also known as the University-Small Business Patent Act, augmented by a subsequent executive order to include multinational corporations, ceded to universities the ownership of patents developed with federal research funds. This enabled schools to attract foreign and U.S. corporate investment, because they could now sell to companies exclusive licenses on all discoveries made under a company's sponsorship. To sweeten the pot, Congress also altered the federal tax code, giving corporations tax credits for investing in university research.

The coalition's theory provides a plausible explanation for Hauptman's mysterious five-year lag time. It suggests that universities promptly started to raise tuition—their only source of unrestricted revenue—to cover the exorbitant venture-capital demands of applied research.

The higher-education establishment, corporations, and both political parties touted the revised patent law as a solution to the nation's competitiveness problem. It was meant to encourage universities to shift their priorities from pure, or basic, research—which rarely has any immediate practical use—to applied research. For universities to do this, however, they would have had to make an up-front investment to modernize laboratories in order to meet

industrial standards, and hire industrially qualified scientists at much higher salaries than those they customarily paid. The discoveries resulting from this applied research, so the argument went, would be more easily translated into marketable products, thus making U.S. corporations more competitive. And the universities would recoup their initial investment and earn a profit from royalties on their patent rights.

These patent-law changes, Minsky argues, transformed the overriding purpose of the university: "Formerly, universities had only employees and capital. Now they have products to sell. Once universities become a business, the objective is not 'education for the people' but looking for marketable products and selling the institution to corporate investors."

The coalition charges that the strengthening of ties between universities and industry has amounted to an enormous indirect public subsidy, in the form of federal research dollars and tuition revenue, to private corporations—including ones from Japan and Europe.

"Corporations sponsor research at universities to use public tax dollars to defray the cost of developing marketable inventions and to spread the risk of failure," says David Noble, a professor of history at York University, in Toronto, and another coalition founder. Corporations fund only about eight percent of university research, Noble says. "They're not building the buildings, or paying for the education of the staff, or supporting the students, or the library, or the land, or the accumulated prestige and knowledge of the university. If they had to replicate these resources in-house, it would cost them orders of magnitude more than what they're paying."

The heightened emphasis on capital-intensive applied research has led a number of schools to cut back course offerings and to eliminate entire departments that don't pay for themselves. Columbia University, for example, phased out its geography and linguistics programs in the spring of 1989 and closed its highly regarded graduate school of library service last June. At the same time, the university built the \$62 million Morris A. Schapiro Center for Engineering and Physical Science Research.

This retrenchment has prompted a debate among administrators about the

role of the university. In a 1989 speech the president of Princeton, Harold Shapiro, said, "Some suggest that undergraduate education 'gets in the way' of frontline and increasingly complex research. Others argue that blockbuster grants for research centers, all of which require some type of cost-sharing, siphon internal funds away from teaching. . . . Should we keep the research and education enterprises together?"

ARTHUR HAUPTMAN discusses the research-tuition connection in *The College Tuition Spiral*, but as an afterthought. Even so, his four-page abbreviated description of the link confirms much of the coalition's conclusion. And when I described to him the coalition's hypothesis, he endorsed it. "I don't think it's hypothetical," he said. "I think it's true."

Hauptman's study shows that despite laments by many college administrators that federal research funding declined in the 1980s, it actually went up four percent a year. And not all of the increase was associated with Pentagon programs; civilian-sector research budgets grew almost as fast as defense-related activities.

Administrators from elite research universities nonetheless complained to Hauptman that federal spending—which represents about 60 percent of all funds spent for campus-based research—did not increase enough to cover research costs adequately. To compete with industry for scientists and engineers, these schools have had to pay six-figure salaries and provide support staff and state-of-the-art laboratories and equipment—which can add up to millions of dollars a year.

How do they make up for shortfalls? Raise tuition, Hauptman says.

"For many years undergraduate tuitions at many universities have supported research by paying for a substantial portion of the fellowships and assistantships that institutions provide to graduate students," he writes. "But this traditional form of cross-subsidy now appears to have been extended to the use of undergraduate tuitions for the direct support of campus-based research."

Erich Bloch, who finished his six-year term as the director of the National Science Foundation in August of 1990, agrees. "No doubt about it," he says, "[research universities] have supported

(Continued on page 43)

arts & ENTERTAINMENT

MARCH 1993

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

INSIDE:

ELLA TAYLOR'S
ALTERNATIVE OSCARS

READERS RESPOND WITH
DRAMA

LOONEY TOON TUNES
REVIVAL

INNOVATIVE OPERA
DESIGN

TRIBUTES TO
MILES DAVIS

IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT,
RECIPIENT OF BEST
PICTURE, BEST DIRECTOR,
BEST ACTOR, BEST
ACTRESS, AND BEST
ADAPTATION
IN 1934

TOGETHER FOR
THE FIRST TIME!

CLARK GABLE and CLAUDETTE COLBERT

"It Happened One Night"
with WALTER CONNOLLY • ROSCOE KARNS
the Cosmopolitan Magazine story by SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS • Screen play by ROBERT RISKIN

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THEATER

by Austin Baer

WHAT DO YOU WANT? OUR READERS VOTE FOR DRAMA

Not long ago, we asked our readers which of the performing arts they would like to see more of on television. The leading category—ahead of opera, ballet, symphonic music, modern dance, jazz, mime, and striptease (honest)—was drama. “One fine play a week would not be too many!” writes



Jack Palance

Dr. Lois R. Fries, of Columbia, South Carolina. No, indeed! Dr. and Mrs. H. J. Sawyer, of West Bloomfield, Michigan, long for old-time live TV drama like CBS's *Playhouse 90*—

which would certainly look classic if the executives broke open the vaults for reruns of, say, *The Eighty Yard Run*, starring the young Paul Newman, or *Requiem for a Heavyweight*, starring Jack Palance.

Margaret R. Wise, of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, expresses a fondness for “plays based on historical novels.” Hear, hear! And how about a rerun of *The Pallisers*, based on six novels by Anthony

Our November Arts & Entertainment Poll asked the question “Do you watch the performing arts on television? If so, which art forms would you like to see more of?” Many readers listed more than one preference. The top 5 categories were:

DRAMA: 32%	SYMPHONIC MUSIC: 20%
OPERA: 28%	MODERN DANCE: 15%
BALLET: 24%	(DON'T WATCH: 3%)

Trollope, with its absorbing portrait of a Victorian marriage of convenience that over a lifetime transforms itself into a marriage of true minds?

A reader from Renton, Washington, would like more drama with “fewer commercial breaks,” a wish many viewers share, though not Johnnie L. Painter, of San Jose, California, who has no use at all for the performing arts on the box: “TV fails to capture the grandeur.” There goes the bathwater, and the baby too. Consider the violent, majestic sweep of the *Henry VI* trilogy and its



The Pallisers

sequel, *Richard III*, as mounted for the small screen by Jane Howell in the PBS series *The Shakespeare Plays*.

Some of our respondents crave spectacle. Brian Blanchette, of Hope Valley, Rhode Island, requests shows specially produced for TV, with “better production values.” Translation: bigger budgets. (Result: more commercials.) Dr. Beth Gruber, of Garden Grove, California, prefers bare bones: “Theater with a neutral viewpoint, that is, with a fixed camera position without close-ups of actors’ faces etc. There are other things going on on stage besides the face of the speaker. We should be the ones to decide where to focus.” Yes, a thousand times yes, in theory, but unless you measure your screen in yards (and unless it is high-definition), what is there to see but a blur? I’ll take multiple cameras every time, camera crews with steady hands, and a video director in command of the medium.



Henry VI

A WORLD OF THEATER FOR A NATION OF PLAYGOERS

Many of our readers say they wish television carried current plays and musicals from Broadway. Why just Broadway? Give me a magic wand and I will give you a rich repertoire of drama new and classical from stages all over the country—beginning this very month. Choose from:

Phantom (Tennessee Rep, Nashville, March 4 to 21). A supremely Broadway-worthy American musical with a book by Arthur Kopit (of *Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feelin' So Sad*) and gorgeous songs by Maury Yeston (of *Nine*)—who had the bad luck to pick up *The Phantom of the Opera* at the same time as Andrew Lloyd Webber what's-his-name.

Strictly Dishonorable (Philadelphia Drama Guild, March 5 to 28). A Mississippi ingenue and her starchy New Jersey fiancé encounter a titled Italian tenor at a deserted Manhattan speakeasy. Guess what happens. Too bad Preston Sturges didn't make the movie versions, but at least he wrote the play



Strictly Dishonorable

upon which they were based. A screwball comedy with heart—from a master.

Waiting for Godot (BoarsHead: Michigan Public Theater, Lansing, March 11 to April 3) and **Endgame** (CSC, New York, March 23 to May 2). Was it not Noel Coward who said to “brush up your Beckett, start quoting him now, brush up your Beckett, and the women you will wow”? No? Oh. There are plenty of other reasons for going back to Sad Samuel of Eire's vaudeilles for Armageddon.

Marvin's Room (Goodman Theatre, Chicago, March 12 to April 17). Three years after its world premiere, at the Goodman Studio, and many prize-winning productions later, Scott McPherson's gentle meditation on mortality returns to the Goodman as a mainstage attraction. It is a most incongruous hit. Marvin, unseen and unheard, is dying of an unnamed illness. The daughter who cares for him with loving tenderness finds out that she is dying too. Since the premiere, the playwright has succumbed to AIDS.

His scenes do not tell much of a story, but their sweet temper reveals an extraordinary soul, full of quiet grace and courage.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill (CenterStage, Baltimore, March 26 to May 9). Near the end of her career, the jazz goddess Billie Holiday reminisces and sings her songs in a two-bit South Philly dive. Lanie Robertson's script, burning bright with flinty spirit and utterly free of self-pity, is a brilliant tour de force.

Annie Warbucks (Neil Simon Theater, New York, opening April 21). Leapin' lizards! Fifteen years later, the original director/lyricist (Martin Charnin), composer (Charles Strouse), librettist (Thomas Meehan), and choreographer (Peter Gennaro) return to the same theater with the further adventures of Andrea McArdle—oops! Raymond Thorne, the show's original FDR, is back in his old role, presumably none the worse for wear. Lauren Gaffney and Harve Presnell take over as Annie and Daddy Warbucks. Sandy, the dog, is played by Cindy, a dog. Woof!

Austin Baer is a writer based in New York.



FILM

by Ella Taylor

My Armani gown, shut out of the Academy Awards yet again, hangs disconsolately in the closet. Bereft but not broken, I submit to you my alternative Oscar nominations, as always full of bromides and snide asides.

TAYLOR'S MADE-TO-MEASURE ACADEMY AWARDS

Best Picture: Clint Eastwood's *Unforgiven* is a magnificently soulful yet witty, unsentimental meditation on the Western and its values, from a movie macho who is willing to play a bungling, over-the-hill loser and to cast a black actor (Morgan Freeman) in a role for which his color is irrelevant.



Clint Eastwood in *Unforgiven*

Runner-Up: Barbara Kopple's brave, sympathetic, but tough-minded Oscar-winning documentary, *American Dream*, about the Hormel meat-packers' strike, was (undeservedly) a box-office flop, probably because it cut so heartbreakingly close to the bone of recessionary misery.

Best First Film: Christopher Munch's *The Hours and Times* dreams up a wistfully lyrical version of the rumored affair between John Lennon and Beatles manager Brian Epstein on a weekend in Barcelona.

Runners-Up: Quentin Tarantino's poised, audacious *Reservoir Dogs* pays mocking tribute to the B-movie caper with a knockout ensemble performance from assorted movie hoods. Nick Gomez's jittery *Laws of Gravity* follows a small-time New York crook and his friends with a beautifully placed hand-held camera and an intricate script.

Best Screenplays: David Webb People's laconic, brainy script for *Unforgiven*; Michael Tolkin's wickedly funny adaptation of his own novel for *The Player*.

Best Actor: Harvey Keitel, for his performances, at once disciplined and over-the-top, in *Reservoir Dogs* and *Bad Lieutenant*, two films that are too profane and too smart ever to win Academy Awards.

Runners-Up: Stephen Rea, for his lost-soul romanticism as the IRA terrorist Fergus in Neil Jordan's *The Crying Game*;

Denzel Washington, for transforming his gentle-hunk image into a steely *Malcolm X*.

Best Actress: Michelle Pfeiffer, for her layered performance as a Southern Jackie Kennedy wanna-be in *Love Field*, and for stealing an admittedly lackluster show as the Catwoman in *Batman Returns*.

Runners-Up: Emma Thompson, for ushering out the last of Edwardian England in *Howard's End*; Miranda Richardson, for her feral terrorist in *The Crying Game*.

Best Supporting Actors: Gene Hackman has given some great performances in a lot of terrible movies; as the casually sadistic cowboy thug in *Unforgiven*, he gives a great performance in a great movie. David Strathairn, for his extraordinary range as both Mary McDonnell's bayou boy in *Passion Fish* and a blind computer hacker in *Sneakers*.

Best Supporting Actresses: Edie Falco, for her complex restraint as a small-time-crook's wife in *Laws of Gravity*; Cynda Williams, for her zoned-out fugitive in Carl Franklin's disturbing road movie, *One False Move*.

Best Foreign Film: Nikita Mikhalkov's beautifully shot *Close to Eden* takes a tenderly antic look at how Western Civ comes to the plains of Mongolia with condoms, television, and Sylvester Stallone.



Close to Eden

Runner-Up: Stephen Gyllenhaal's *Waterland* captures the spirit of British novelist Graham Swift's long, low howl of sorrow at the pain of living, and his celebration of the redemptive power of history, in a magical tale of dark deeds in the English fen country.

And so from the lofty to the truly silly, I conclude with my Oscar picks for the following oft-overlooked categories:

The **Extremely French Film Award** goes to *Tous les matins du monde*, which suggests that musical genius works only under conditions of extreme grief in tastefully furnished country houses, proving once and for all that in France, at least, art is *très* sad and *très* well-dressed.



Damage

The **Aerobic Sex Award**, to Jeremy Irons and Juliette Binoche for gymnastic excellence as illicit lovers in *Damage*, in which they copulate in funny positions every 10 minutes or so for the entire movie.



Nick Nolte

The **Silly Accent Award** goes jointly to Nick Nolte, whose hyper-Italian intonation in the film *Lorenzo's Oil* makes him sound more like Geppetto in *Pino-*

cchio than the World Bank economist he is supposed to be; and Keanu Reeves, who as the young Brit in *Dracula* comes on like John Cleese doing Prince Charles.

The **Highly Unlikely Jewish Mother Award** goes jointly to Shirley MacLaine and Jessica Tandy for their undercooked performances as a Queens matriarch and her mom in *Used People*.

The **Services to Multiculturalism Award** goes to Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston for making it all the way into the sack in *The Bodyguard* without noticing that they were different colors.

The **Bite Your Tongue Award** goes to Vanessa Redgrave, who in *Howard's End* must have died a thousand deaths at having to say, "I am only too happy not to have the vote."

Ella Taylor is a film critic for L.A. Weekly.

To make your Oscar picks for 1992, fill out and return the card in this section. We will present the Readers' Choice Award in a future issue.

POPULAR MUSIC AND JAZZ

by Charles M. Young and Bob Blumenthal

BECK'S BACK ON TRACK



Jeff Beck

Since leading the Yardbirds, in the mid-sixties, Jeff Beck has developed and deserved a reputation for exquisite taste and originality in his guitar playing—delicate and melodic one moment, psychedelic and demented the next, always with perfect tone. He has also developed and deserved a reputation for being obtuse, often quitting tours after a few shows to go home and work on his hot rods. His fans scratch their heads but always await his next work with eager anticipation.

This spring sees the release of two new Beck recordings that should, for once, satiate his audience. The first is *Frankie's House* (Epic), soundtrack to a television mini-series about two photojournalists covering the Vietnam War. Pure instrumental, the 15 cuts here take up where the soundtrack to *Apocalypse Now* left off. Outside of Jimi Hendrix, who provided the soundtrack to Vietnam while it was happening, Beck conveys

the insanity of violence better than any other guitarist; there are many terrifying moments here, either explosive or eerie. What really sets the album apart is Beck's absorption of traditional *koto* music from Vietnam and Thailand. Hearing an introspective *koto* lick in the middle of a blues run, and vice versa, is just about as cool as multiculturalism can get.

Next month, watch for *Crazy Legs* (also Epic), by Beck and the Big Town Playboys, an English roots rock band. In 17 songs they pay tribute to fifties rocker Gene Vincent and his band the Blue Caps. Beck especially is paying tribute to Vincent's guitarist Cliff Gallup, whose chops originally inspired Beck to play guitar during his adolescence. If you have any taste for rockabilly, this CD will delight and exhilarate. —C.M.Y.

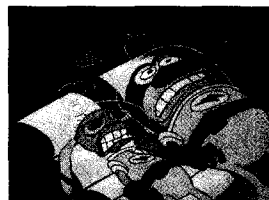
MARTY BROWN COUNTRY

Marty Brown promoted his first album, *High and Dry*, in 1991 by driving around the South in his Cadillac convertible and playing shows at Wal-Marts with his acoustic guitar. His music fits that approach well: stripped-down, direct, a little corny, hilarious from one perspective, and sad from another. His heroes are Hank Williams, Sr., and Jimmie Rodgers, the Singing Brakeman, and his approach to country music seems to have skipped the

last 40 years as an aberration. Although he received lots of favorable reviews, radio playlists have favored the likes of Billy Ray Cyrus, the Anti-Hank. Brown's sophomore album, *Wild Kentucky Skies* (MCA Nashville), departs not a whit from his previous approach—this guy knows how to make his voice crack with that semi-yodel of the great early C&W singers. He's connected to that deep well of storytelling that has informed this genre at its best. —C.M.Y.

THAT'S NOT ALL, FOLKS!

One of America's most heard and least known composers, Raymond Scott has been enjoying a revival of late—typically without a whole lot of people noticing even as they are hearing. What they're hearing is *The Ren & Stimpy Show*, the hit cartoon series on



Ren and Stimpy

Nickelodeon, where Scott's music has been relicensed after several decades as the soundtrack of hundreds of classic cartoons. Adapted for Warner Bros. by Carl Stallings, Scott's music had more eccentric ideas packed into fewer notes than anyone else's except Spike Jones, who was more

directly comedic. Scott created an atmosphere with his standard jazz quintet where anything could happen and anything could make sense, contributing mightily to the mythic dreamscapes inhabited by Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck. In Scott's first anthology of original studio recordings since 1953, Columbia has assembled some of his most notorious songs, whose wonderfully crackpot melodies will be instantly familiar to any cartoon fan even if the titles are not: "Dinner Music for a Pack of Hungry Cannibals" and "At an Arabian House Party." —C.M.Y.

MILES-MANNERED SAX

Last year, three decades after making his first recordings, tenor saxophonist Joe Henderson became a commercial success. The vehicle was *Lush Life* (Verve), where his assertive playing was enhanced by a rich and unified program of Billy Strayhorn compositions and formats that varied from quintet to a cappella. Henderson's follow-up, *So Near, So Far* (Verve), is an even more successful concept effort. "Musings for Miles" is the theme, which receives a subtle twist by giving the saxophonist and a trio of electric-era Miles Davis sidemen a program of acoustic-era Miles Davis music. Bassist Dave Holland and drummer Al Foster form an impeccable rhythm section, and John Scofield's guitar adds steel and spring. Henderson himself delivers one of his leanest performances, a fitting homage. Producers



Joe Henderson

Richard Seidel and Don Sickler made excellent choices from the Davis repertoire, with extra kudos to arranger Sickler for adding structure to "Miles Ahead" and "Flamenco Sketches" without distorting the evanescence of the originals.

A worthy complement to *So Near* is another sax/guitar blend, *Bittersweet* (Sunnyside), although Glenn Wilson plays baritone sax and is heard in duet with guitarist Rory Stuart. They converse eloquently in a program containing one tune Miles Davis recorded ("Eighty-One"), two derived from Davis staples ("Reflections" and "Autumn Left" are based on "So What" and "Autumn Leaves," respectively), and others written by Davis associates. Wilson's multitracked baritone on "You Know I Care" makes a different allusion—to Joe Henderson, who introduced the ballad on his 1964 classic, *Inner Urge* (Blue Note). —B.B.

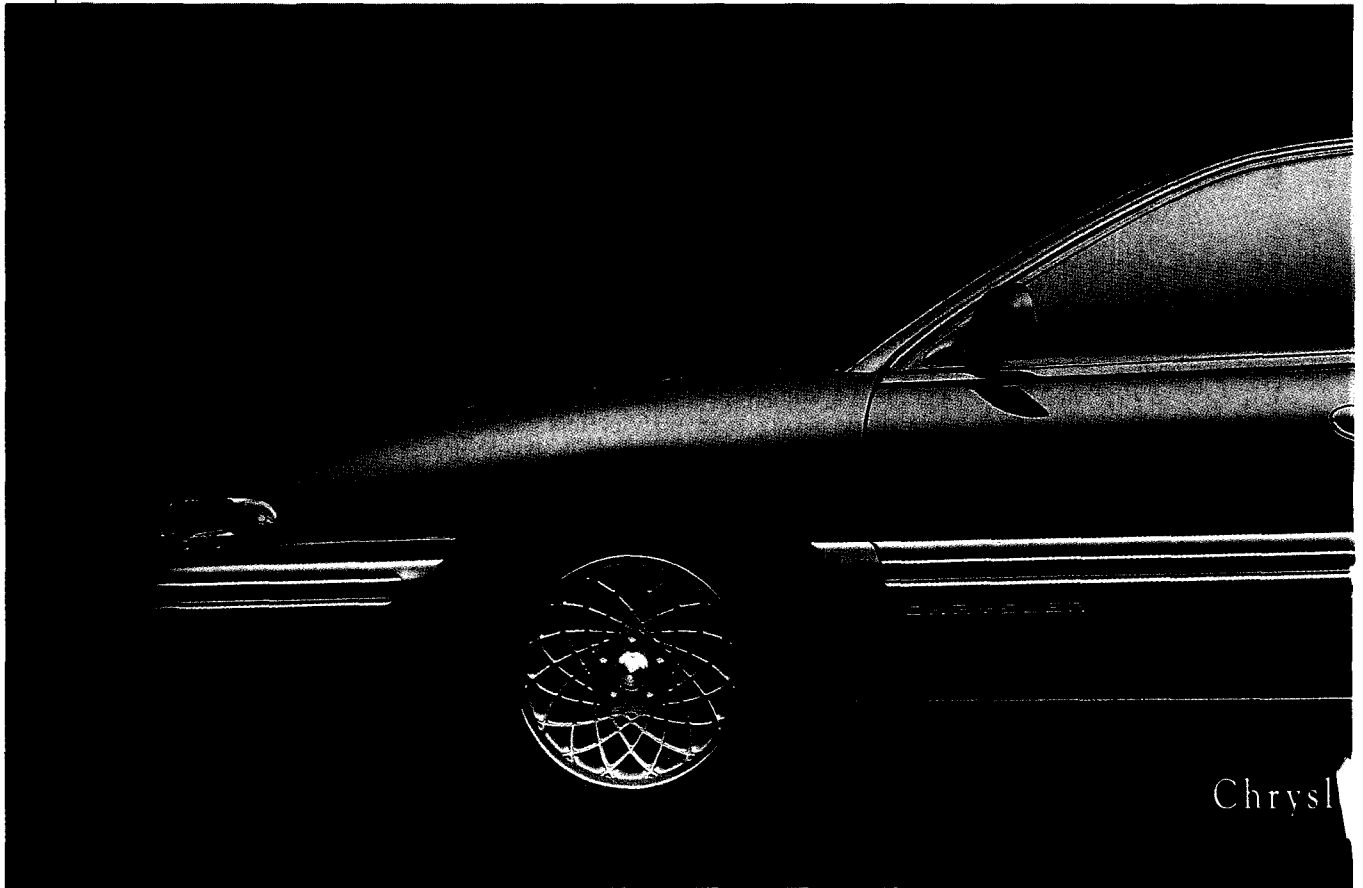
Charles M. Young is the executive editor of *Musician* magazine. Bob Blumenthal is a jazz critic for *The Boston Globe* and *CD Review*.

MARK SELIGER

DAVID GARR

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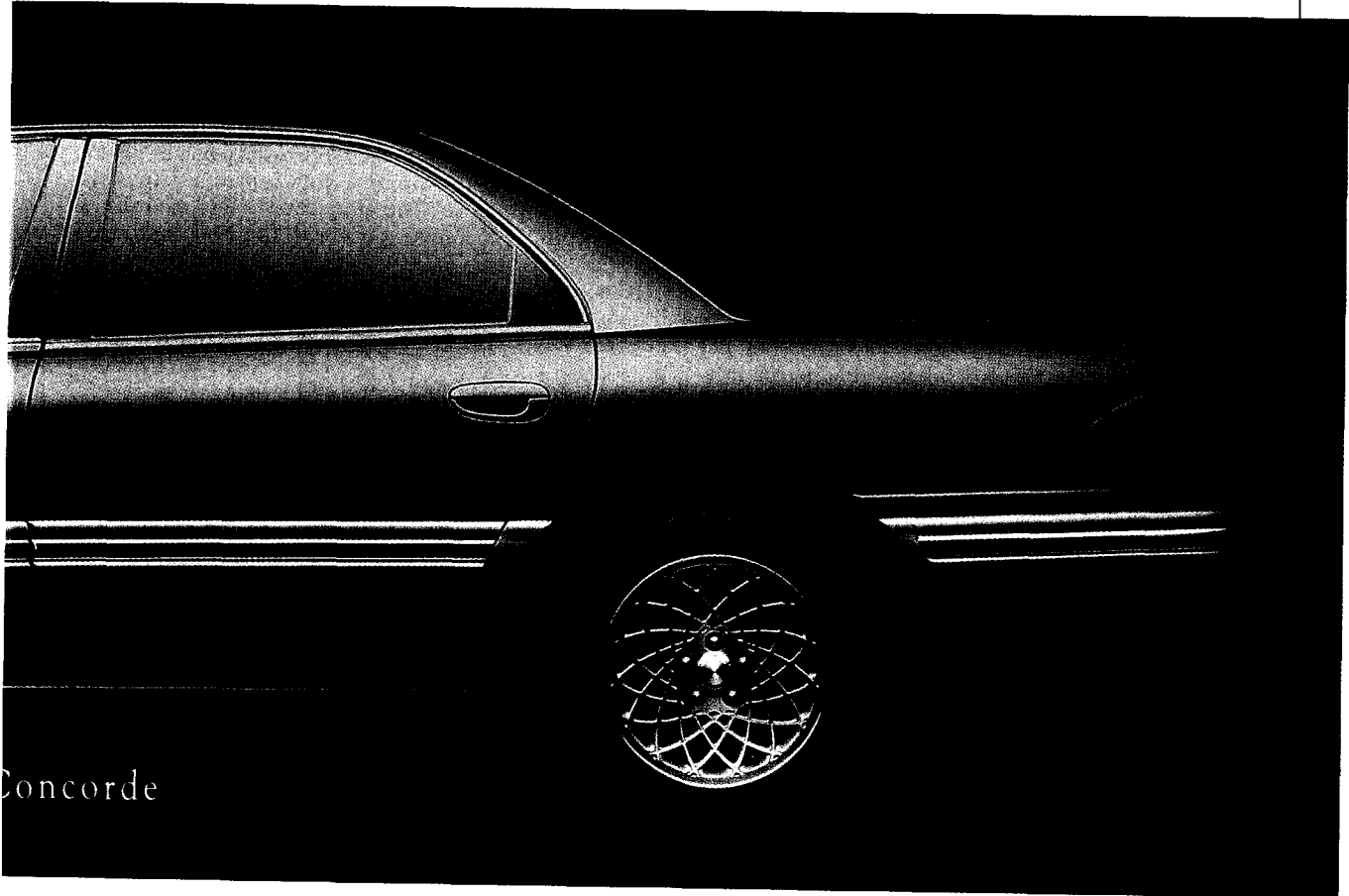
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CLASSICAL MUSIC

by Austin Baer

MESMERIZED BY THE LIGHT

In *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Claude Debussy's opera from the symbolist play of Maurice Maeterlinck, the most shattering moment is also the simplest. Prince Golaud, a widower, has found the distraught Mélisande in a forest, taken her home, and married her. She and Golaud's younger half-brother, Pelléas, have grown close. Are they lovers? One night, in jealous self-humiliation, Golaud hoists his terrified little son, Yniold, up on his shoulder to spy on them through a castle window. The boy sees the two staring into a light. What does this mean? The absence of evidence only stokes Golaud's rage. Maybe it was this scene at the window that inspired the Seattle Opera's choice of set designer. It is Dale Chihuly, the artist in glass, the first recipient of the National Living Treasure Award (bestowed



A detail of Dale Chihuly's set design

by the University of North Carolina), the subject of a one-man show in the Decorative Arts section of the Louvre, now designing for the stage for the first time. The match is inspired: Chihuly's creations of light, color, and form belong to a world whose mysteries are deepest where they are most transparent (March 13 to 25).

AT LAST: THE COMPLETE SCHUBERT SONATAS



Franz Schubert

Seasons ago, the Tisch Center for the Arts of the 92nd Street Y, in New York, set out to present the complete works of Franz Schubert in several annual installments, each one supported by an ambitious symposium, master classes, and exhibitions. Complicating the logistics, raising the expense, and sacrificing aesthetic balance, the first seasons progressed in strict chronological order. Then, not far past the copious juvenilia, money ran out. Now, the Schubertiade resumes with a difference. This year's topic is "Schubert and the Piano." In a series of six concerts (March 17 to April 4), Andras Schiff performs the piano sonatas, the first time they have been performed in their totality in this country. A recording of the composer's posthumous song collection *Schwanengesang* with the tenor Peter Schreier (on the London label) suggests how well Schiff's limpid, jeweled touch should serve this inexhaustible repertoire.

NO LONGER THE OBSCURE OBOE

The oboe's pungent honk is a fine garnish that makes a risky entrée. Even William Bennett, principal oboist of the San Francisco Symphony, would seem to agree. "It is a popular notion that all orchestral musicians covet the career of a traveling concerto soloist," he has written, "so it may come as a surprise to the audience that standing up at the front of the stage is not for everyone." The occasion for this reflection was the premiere, last December, of a bright new oboe concerto, written on commission from his orchestra, at Bennett's request, by the American composer John Harbison. In a fever of anticipation, Bennett wrote Harbison a long letter detailing his technical limitations. He also enclosed tapes and

sheet music to illustrate his capacities. Harbison has picked up Bennett's capacities for songfulness, speed, and rhythmic surprise; limitations are not much in evidence. Now, Bennett gets a taste of the life of the traveling concerto soloist when the SFS performs "his" concerto in its New York premiere, at Carnegie Hall (March 9).



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A TORCH IS PASSED

Gregor Piatigorsky (1903–1976) is a name to be named with legends. At 13, the Ukrainian-born cellist played solo in a recital of music by Fyodor Chaliapin. At 20, he was appointed principal cellist of the Berlin Philharmonic. At 26, he gave his New York debut in the Dvořák Cello Concerto. At 33, he married a Rothschild. It can hardly have hurt his career that at 40, he was considered, along with Gary Cooper, one of the two handsomest men in Hollywood. More to the point, he played his instrument with innate, aristocratic poise. The eloquence of his recordings has lost nothing to the passing years.



Isserlis and Taverer

Superb compact-disc reissues on the Pearl label have been out for some time; this month brings more on RCA Victor. The New England Conservatory is celebrating the legacy of the great artist and teacher, too, by bestowing its first NEC/Piatigorsky

Artist Award. Steven Isserlis, the recipient, delights in exploring new compositions, as did Piatigorsky. In a concert with the New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson Thomas (March 31, Jordan Hall, Boston; April 2, Carnegie Hall), Isserlis will play the North American premiere of *The Protecting Veil*, written for him by the British composer John Tavener (recorded on Virgin Classics). At 45 minutes, during which the soloist plays continuously, this icon in sound for cello and strings commemorates the appearance of the Virgin during an all-night vigil in 10th-century Constantinople, at a time of great danger from the Saracens. For all its variety of tone and gesture, *The Protecting Veil* hovers in wondrous stillness, free of false pieties, austere yet brimming with beauty.

Austin Baer is a writer based in New York.

March 9, at 10 p.m. EST. This BBC production features the work of contemporary dance-music composer Malcolm McLaren.

For a chance to win a free year's subscription to the A&E Network's journal, respond to this month's poll. The first 100 cards postmarked will win.



(Continued from page 34)

part of their research with tuition funds. . . . Research has become the prime reason for [the university's] existence. At one time it was education."

Both Hauptman and Minsky say that the situation at research universities has had a trickle-down effect on less prestigious state and private institutions. More and more schools "want to be considered world-class," as one former higher-education-association president says. And that means research. It's required for tenure, and many find it more lucrative and stimulating than teaching. It also brings prestige, not only to professors but also to their institutions.

The trend has pulled faculty members out of the classroom and into the lab. Teaching loads have lightened considerably at most institutions in both the sciences and the humanities, and many highly paid star professors never see an undergraduate—they stipulate it in their contracts. This, too, affects tuition, according to a former official of the Bush Administration. In a report released in November of 1990, Lynne Cheney, then the head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, observed that the emphasis on research over teaching had forced schools to hire more instructors, contributing to tuition increases.

Last September a House committee arrived at similar conclusions. In its brief report, "College Education: Paying More and Getting Less," the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families laid the blame for tuition inflation on the heightened emphasis on research at schools seeking to emulate Ivy League universities. The recession exacerbated the problem, the report said, by forcing schools to choose between reducing teaching budgets and reducing research budgets. Teaching lost out.

Finally, the fact that many of the top research universities are price leaders, to which other schools look when deciding what to charge, also drives up tuition throughout the system. To try to alleviate a related problem, the federal government recently moved to curb interschool collusion in setting tuition rates and financial-aid awards. After a two-year investigation of about sixty prestigious schools, the Justice Department in late May of 1991 charged the eight Ivy League schools and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with violating the Sherman Antitrust Act by illegally conspiring to limit price com-

petition on financial aid. To avoid a costly legal battle, the Ivies immediately agreed to stop their thirty-five-year practice of offering uniform financial-aid awards. They also agreed not to exchange information on planned tuition increases or faculty salaries, even though they were not formally accused of doing so. MIT, however, refused to sign the consent decree and was convicted last September of fixing prices on financial-aid packages. Meanwhile, the Justice Department is continuing its investigation of other schools' financial-aid practices.

THE RESEARCH-tuition connection has gained in significance as relationships among universities, government, and business have changed over the past twenty years. In the mid-1970s universities began to look to the business community as a potential ally against "intrusive" federal regulation and as a source of funding to offset flattened federal support. Corporations, sensing an impending return to normalcy on campus after the Vietnam War, warmed to the idea of partnerships. Not only were they interested in rolling back federal regulations, but a marked decline in their ability to compete internationally had them scrambling to find ways to promote productivity and technological innovation. They were also attracted by the growing commercial potential of biotechnology—then the product of campus laboratories. Rather than increase their own in-house research-and-development capacity, which would have reduced their profit margins, they tapped into university research.

A major obstacle for corporations, however, was the patent law. At that time the government owned the patents on discoveries made through federally funded research and licensed them nonexclusively, without charge, on an ad hoc basis. The universities wanted ownership, which would allow them both to license patentable inventions directly to corporations for a royalty and to solicit up-front contributions from corporations. But corporations wanted exclusive licenses. If they were going to help pay for specific university research projects, they wanted their initial investment protected. Otherwise, they argued, there was no incentive to support university research.

Both sectors claimed that changing

the law would facilitate "technology transfer"—the transfer of discoveries and inventions from university labs to corporations and then to the marketplace. The paramount argument for patent-law revision, though, was that it would greatly improve the nation's competitive posture in world markets.

Sheldon Steinbach, general counsel for the American Council on Education, began lobbying for the new law in 1974, when he started working closely with Senator Birch Bayh, one of the sponsors of the University-Small Business Patent Act. A few years later Steinbach helped Representative Charles Vanik draft the first research-and-development tax-credit proposal—which Congress eventually passed—to give corporations an additional inducement to support research.

ACE's lobbying efforts thus helped create a situation in which the American public now pays for university research four ways: federal tax dollars underwrite most campus-based research; undergraduate tuitions help pay for labs, scientists, and research assistants; corporations investing in campus research receive tax breaks, which means a loss for the federal treasury; and a corporation with exclusive rights to a patent produced by publicly funded research can sell the product at a monopoly price.

Have campus-corporate ventures strengthened U.S. competitiveness or helped our domestic economy? The number of patents issued to universities has grown considerably, nearly doubling from 619 in 1986 to 1,173 in 1990, according to the Association of University Technology Managers. Despite this boom, however, there have been few bona fide commercial successes. Most of the discoveries have been limited and technical.

Advocates of university-industry partnerships, however, say that ten years is too brief a time over which to evaluate their success. Even so, a former president of Harvard University—the school that has made some of the biggest corporate deals on record—disputes the idea that they will ever significantly strengthen U.S. competitiveness. In his 1990 book *Universities and the Future of America*, Derek Bok writes that it is a "fallacy" that spending more on university research and promoting university-industry ties will "do much to restore the preeminence of American business."



Most experts have concluded that the real problems of American competitiveness do not lie early in the product cycle at the stage of making inventions or even starting new companies. The trouble typically begins in later phases when products must be standardized and produced in large quantities at low prices and high quality.

Bok points out that the Japanese did not invent color television, video recorders, or semi-conductors but they are more efficient at designing and manufacturing state-of-the-art versions.

Another reason university-industry collaboration will not help U.S. competitiveness, the Coalition for Universities in the Public Interest says, is that Japanese and European corporations have the same access to federally funded campus research that U.S. firms do. A number of major universities, most notably the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, have aggressively courted foreign companies, and their efforts have paid off. According to a 1988 study by the General Accounting Office, links with U.S. universities helped Toshiba to develop new technology for recording images on disks, Toyota to devise new engineering stress sensors, and the Asahi Chemical Company to computerize its manufacturing processes.

In June of 1989 a House subcommittee held hearings on the issue and bluntly criticized universities that were selling research results to foreign corporations. The legislators said that such actions undercut the U.S. economy when, ironically, university officials were asking for more federal support for campus research to help U.S. companies compete internationally.

As a follow-up, the subcommittee instructed the GAO to conduct a study of technology transfer from the schools that receive the most federal grant money. The study, published last May, found that twenty-four of the thirty-five universities surveyed had industrial liaison programs with at least one foreign member. In total, 499 foreign corporations were involved, and the programs at MIT, Stanford, and the University of California at Berkeley accounted for 58 percent of them.

The GAO study was incorporated into a report by the House Committee on Government Operations, issued last October, which concluded that "the benefits of publicly funded research are

being sold at bargain basement prices to foreign corporations, and that the very programs that were initiated to increase U.S. competitiveness are benefitting our economic competitors instead." Among other things, it recommended that the federal government require schools to give preference to U.S. corporations when granting patent licenses.

DAVID NOBLE, who was the first to publicize MIT's extensive ties to Japanese corporations, says that such relationships are far from the only problems created by federal patent and tax laws. He argues that these laws are essentially anti-competitive. Exclusive patent licenses give corporations a monopoly on a product for up to seventeen years, but, as Noble points out, "there is no adequate requirement in U.S. patent law that ensures a patent will be worked—that there will be any return to the public." In fact, corporations have sat on patents countless times in the history of science-based industry.

When a corporation does decide to work a patent, it can charge the public whatever it wants. Burroughs Wellcome has been roundly criticized for inflating the price of AZT, the anti-AIDS drug that the National Cancer Institute helped develop. In March of 1991 a group of HIV-infected patients sued the British pharmaceutical firm to strip it of its exclusive patent, alleging that the company misleadingly took credit in its patent application for work done by federal scientists. That suit was ultimately dismissed. But the following July the National Institutes of Health granted a nonexclusive license to manufacture AZT to Barr Laboratories "to the extent that NIH is found to have an inventorship interest in the six AZT-related patents issued to Burroughs Wellcome," according to a statement made by Dr. Bernadine Healy, the director of the NIH. Barr Laboratories and Burroughs Wellcome are involved in litigation that will be decided this May.

In a less well known case Michigan State University and NCI developed cisplatin, an anti-cancer drug, with federal research funding, and the government licensed it exclusively to Bristol-Myers (now Bristol-Myers Squibb). Other drug companies have shown interest in producing generic versions, but Bristol-Myers Squibb controls the original patent in the United States and

has kept the drug's price artificially high.

"The exclusive license is the fulcrum," Leonard Minsky says, "allowing corporations to make excessive profits above and beyond the profits that can be made in a competitive situation. Granting corporations tax breaks for funding their own research, and monopoly control of a product developed with federal research dollars, is corporate welfare. These are public handouts designed to make U.S. companies competitive, but they're counter-competitive devices that reinforce the disability they're designed to cure. We are subsidizing an inefficient system."

OVER THE past forty years federal initiatives have helped open the gates of the academy to women, low-income whites, and racial and ethnic minorities. The commercialization of campus research, however, coupled with the federal government's shift from student-aid grants to loans, has rolled back those gains. Access to higher education is becoming progressively restricted to those students—largely of white, upper-middle-class background—who can pay. The result? Stratification in the college system increasingly mirrors the social stratification that higher education once helped to overcome.

Proponents argue that closer university-industry ties will generate new products and enhance U.S. competitiveness, but little has happened since 1980 to justify the huge public subsidies or the end of affordable education for many Americans.

The policy has sparked little debate on Capitol Hill, where it still enjoys bipartisan support. Even so, the Coalition for Universities in the Public Interest maintains that the commercialization of publicly funded research is an issue as important to the nation's future as environmental protection.

"Just as Americans should be concerned about the regulation of the oil under the ground and the timber above it," David Noble says, "they should also be concerned about this precious and irreplaceable asset—what some call intellectual capital. We have no quarrel with universities acting in any way they want so long as they don't take public funds. But when they do—and nearly all do—to ask the question What's in it for the public? is not only legitimate, it's essential democratic behavior."

—Elliott Negin

Let's just go!

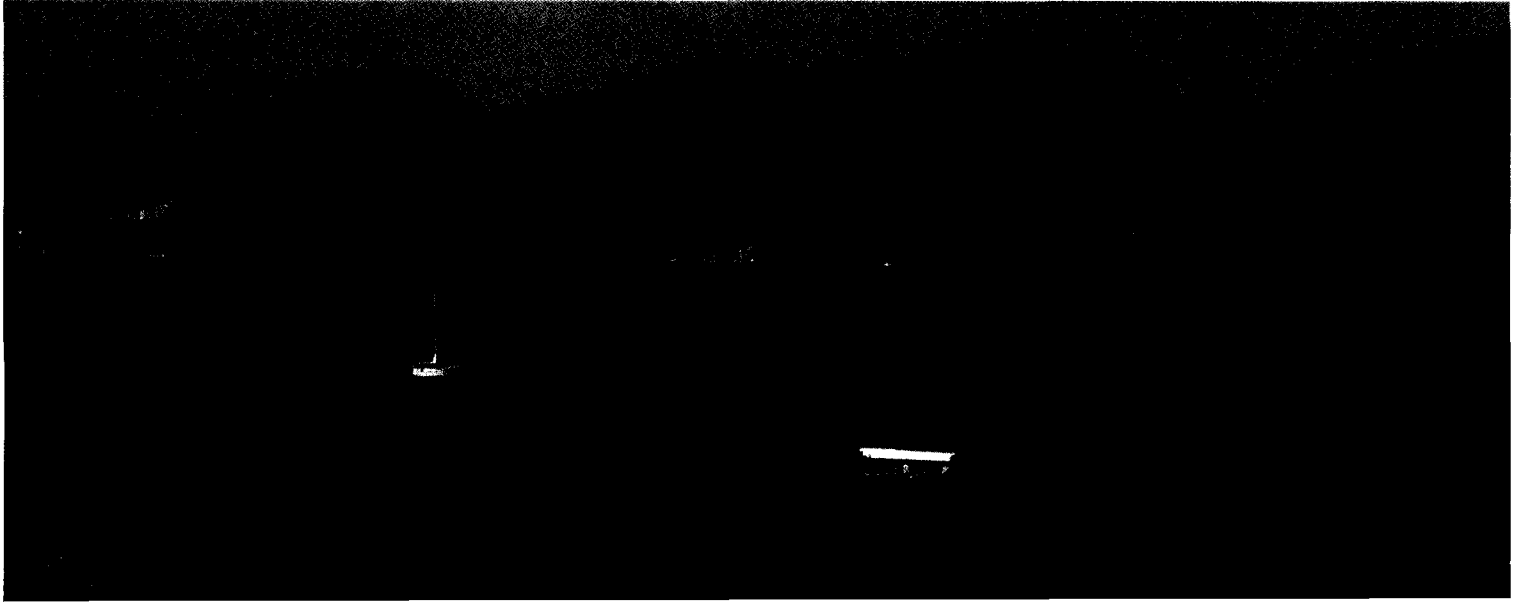
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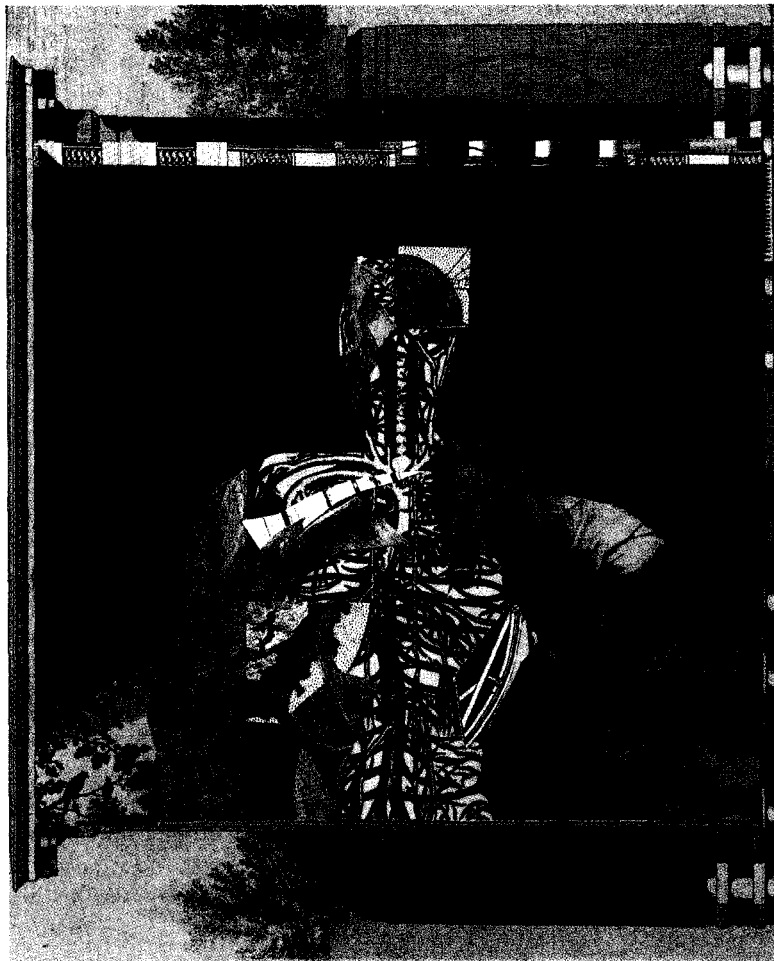


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An introduction to a muddled and sometimes contentious world of scientific research—one whose findings, now as tentative as they are suggestive, may someday shed light on the sexual orientation of everyone

HOMOSEXUALITY AND BIOLOGY

BY CHANDLER BURR



THE ISSUE OF HOMOSEXUALITY HAS ARRIVED at the forefront of America's political consciousness. The nation is embroiled in debate over the acceptance of openly gay soldiers in the U.S. military. It confronts a growing number of cases in the courts over the legal rights of gay people with respect to marriage, adoption, insurance, and inheritance. It has seen referenda opposing gay rights reach the ballot in two states and become enacted in one of them—Colorado, where local ordinances banning discrimination against homosexuals were repealed. The issue of homosexuality has always been vol-

atile, and it is sure to continue to inflame political passions.

It is timely and appropriate that at this juncture a scientific discipline, biology, has begun to ask the fundamental question *What is homosexuality?* And it has begun to provide glimmers of answers that may in turn not only enhance our self-knowledge as human beings but also have some influence, however indirect, on our politics.

What makes the science in this case so problematic, quite apart from the usual technical difficulties inherent in biological research—particularly neurobiological research, which accounts for much of the present investigation—is the ineffable nature of our psychosexual selves.

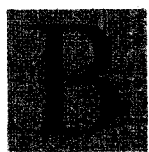
This encompasses a vast universe of stimulation and response, of aesthetic and erotic sensibilities. There are those who see an element of hubris in the quest to explain such things in biological terms. Others see not so much hubris as hype: certain well-publicized findings, they fear, could turn out to be milestones on the road to an intellectual dead end.

It is undeniably true that neurobiological research is often pursued in a context of great ignorance. The brain remains an organ of mystery even in general, not to mention with regard to specific functions. "We don't know" may be the most frequently used words in neurobiology, and they seem to be used with special frequency when the subject of sexual orientation comes up. Once, I mentioned to a researcher how often I heard these words on the lips of her colleagues, and she replied, "Good—then they're saying the right thing." In this context, and also considering that the subject matter is politically charged, professional rivalries are inevitable and occasionally bitter. Some of those involved in the research are motivated not only by scientific but also by personal concerns. Many of the scientists who have been studying homosexuality are gay, as am I.

Homosexuality's invitation to biology has been standing for years. Homosexuals have long maintained that sexual orientation, far from being a personal choice or lifestyle (as it is often called), is something neither chosen nor changeable; heterosexuals who have made their peace with homosexuals have often done so by accepting that premise. The very term "sexual orientation," which in the 1980s replaced "sexual preference," asserts the deeply rooted nature of sexual desire and love. It implies biology.

Researchers can look back on two histories: a century-long, highly problematic psychological investigation of homosexuality, and a short but extremely complex history of biological research that started out as an examination of ovulation in rats. Three distinct but interrelated biological fields are involved in the recent work on sexual orientation: neuroanatomy, psychoendocrinology, and genetics.

The Background



IOLOGISTS EMBARKED UPON RESEARCH INTO homosexuality in response to an intellectual vacuum created by the failure of other sciences to solve the riddle of sexual orientation. "Other sciences" mostly means psychiatry. As Michael Bailey and Richard Pillard, the authors of one of the most important genetic inquiries into homosexuality, have observed, decades of psychiatric research into possible environmental causes of homosexuality—that is to say, social and cultural causes—show "small effect size and are causally ambiguous."

As a distinct concept, homosexuality is relatively recent.

David Halperin points out in *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality* that the term itself first appeared in German (*Homosexualität*) in a pamphlet published in Leipzig in 1869; it entered the English language two decades later. That some human beings engage in sexual activity with others of the same sex has, of course, been noted since antiquity. Historically, however, the focus was on the acts themselves rather than on the actors. The historian John Boswell, of Yale, has noted that during the Middle Ages "same-sex sex" was regarded as a sin, but those who committed that sin were not defined as constituting a type of people different from others. Between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century same-sex sex became a crime as well as a sin, but again, those who committed such crimes were not categorized as a class of human being. This changed in the nineteenth century, when modern medicine and particularly the science of psychiatry came to view homosexuality as a form of mental illness. By the 1940s homosexuality was discussed as an aspect of psychopathic, paranoid, and schizoid personality disorders.

Having defined homosexuality as a pathology, psychiatrists and other doctors made bold to "treat" it. James Harrison, a psychologist who produced the 1992 documentary film *Changing Our Minds*, notes that the medical profession viewed homosexuality with such abhorrence that virtually any proposed treatment seemed defensible. Lesbians were forced to submit to hysterectomies and estrogen injections, although it became clear that neither of these had any effect on their sexual orientation. Gay men were subjected to similar abuses. *Changing Our Minds* incorporates a film clip from the late 1940s, now slightly muddy, of a young gay man undergoing a transorbital lobotomy. We see a small device like an ice pick inserted through the eye socket, above the eyeball and into the brain. The pick is moved back and forth, reducing the prefrontal lobe to a hemorrhaging pulp. Harrison's documentary also includes a grainy black-and-white clip from a 1950s educational film produced by the U.S. Navy. A gay man lies in a hospital bed. Doctors strap him down and attach electrodes to his head. "We're going to help you get better," says a male voice in the background. When the power is turned on, the body of the gay man jerks violently, and he begins to scream. Doctors also tried castration and various kinds of aversion therapy. None of these could be shown to change the sexual orientation of the people involved.

Among those who looked into the matter was the sex researcher Alfred Kinsey, whose 1948 report *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* showed homosexuality to be surprisingly common across lines of family, class, and educational and geographic background. In his book *Being Homosexual*, the psychoanalyst Richard Isay writes,

Kinsey and his co-workers for many years attempted to find patients who had been converted from homosexuality to heterosexuality during therapy, and were surprised that they could not find one whose sexu-

al orientation had been changed. When they interviewed persons who claimed they had been homosexuals but were now functioning heterosexually, they found that all these men were simply suppressing homosexual behavior . . . and that they used homosexual fantasies to maintain potency when they attempted intercourse. One man claimed that, although he had once been actively homosexual, he had now "cut out all of that and don't even think of men—except when I masturbate."

Psychiatry not only consistently failed to show that homosexuality was a preference, a malleable thing, susceptible to reversal; it

also consistently failed to show that homosexuality was a pathology. In 1956, in Chicago, a young psychologist named Evelyn Hooker presented a study to a meeting of the American Psychological Association. Hooker had during her training been routinely instructed in the theory of homosexuality as a pathology. A

group of young gay men with whom she had become friendly seemed, however, to be quite healthy and well adjusted. One of them, a former student of hers, sat her down one day and, as she recalls in *Changing Our Minds*, said, "Now, Evelyn, it is your scientific duty to study men like me." She demurred. It was only when a fellow scientist remarked to her, "He's right—we know nothing about them," that Hooker sought and received a study grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. She chose a group of thirty gay men as the objects of her research and thirty straight men as controls; none of the sixty had ever sought or undergone psychiatric treatment. "It was the first time [homosexuals] had been studied outside a medical setting or prison," she says. "I was prepared, if I was so convinced, to say that these men were not as well adjusted as they seemed on the surface."

Hooker administered psychological tests to her sixty subjects, including the Rorschach ink-blot test, producing sixty psychological profiles. She removed all identifying marks, including those indicating sexual orientation, and, to eliminate her own biases, gave them for interpretation to three eminent psychologists. One of these was Bruno Klopfer, who believed that he would be able to distinguish homosexuals from heterosexuals by means of the Rorschach test. As it turned out, none of the three could tell the homosexuals and heterosexuals apart. In side-by-side comparisons of matched profiles, the heterosexuals and homosexuals were indistinguishable, demonstrating an equal distribution of pathology and mental

health. Reviewing Hooker's results from a test in which the subject creates pictures with cutout figures, one of the interpreters, a psychologist named Edwin Shneidman, stumbled onto a particular subject's orientation only when he came across a cutout scene depicting two men in a bedroom. Shneidman remembers, "I said to Evelyn, 'Gee, I wish I could say that I see it all now, that this is the profile of a person with a homosexual orientation, but I can't see it at all.'"

Hooker's research throughout her long career was driven by the belief that for psychiatry to be minimally scientific, pathology must be defined in a way that is objec-

tive and empirically observable. Her study was the first of many showing that homosexuality could not be so defined as pathology. In 1973 the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its official *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, signifying the end of homosexuality's official status as a disease. Today's psychiatrists and

psychologists, with very few exceptions, do not try to change sexual orientation, and those aspiring to work in the fields of psychiatry and psychology are now trained not to regard homosexuality as a disease.

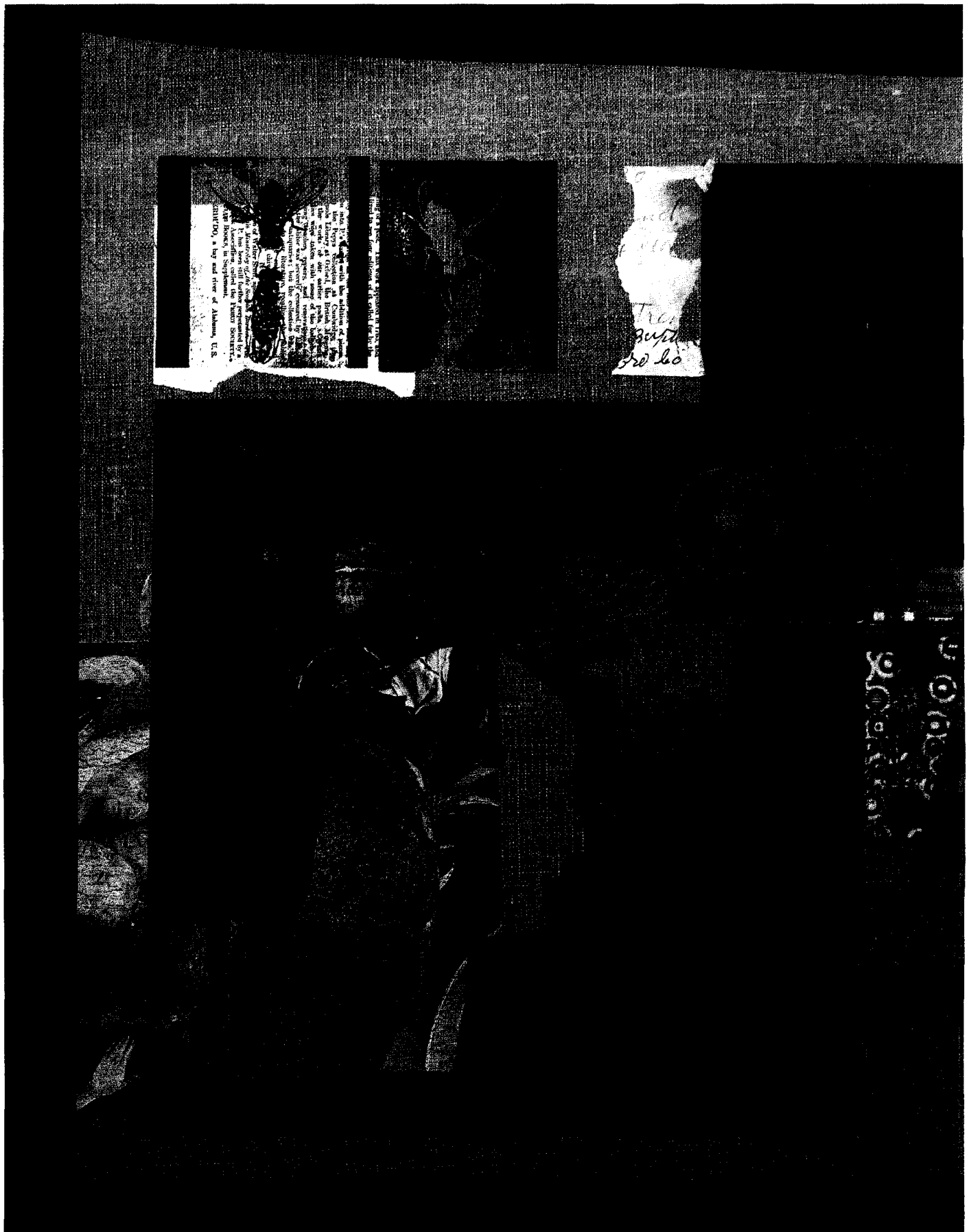
Anatomy Lessons

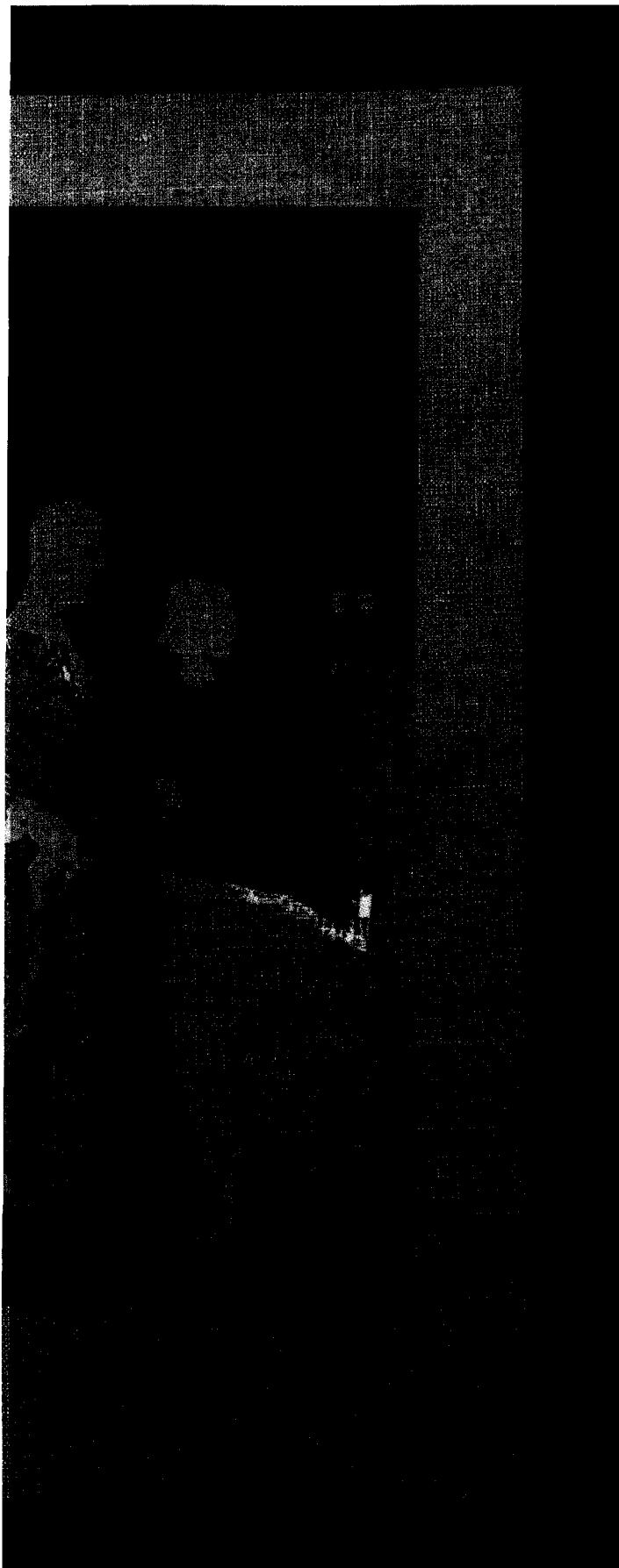


WITH HOMOSEXUALITY MOVED FROM THE realm of psychiatric pathology into the realm of normal variants on human sexual behavior, research efforts took a new turn. Psychiatry had succeeded in defining what homosexuality is *not*—not in explaining what it is. Questions of etiology, in this as in other psychiatric matters, thus became by default questions for neurobiology. Are homosexuals and heterosexuals biologically different? In thinking about this question, biologists have been greatly influenced by findings that involve what may be a related question: Just how, neurologically, do men differ from women?

In 1959, at the University of California at Los Angeles, the neuroendocrinologist Charles Barraclough found that if a female rat was injected shortly before or after birth with testosterone, a male sex hormone, the abnormal amount of this hormone would make the rat permanently sterile, unable to ovulate. "Ovulation" as used here is in part a technical term: it refers both to what a lay person would think of as ovulation—the movement of an egg from the ovary into the fallopian tube—and to the series of hormonal interactions that cause that event.

HOMOSEXUALITY'S INVITATION TO BIOLOGY HAS BEEN STANDING FOR YEARS. HOMOSEXUALS HAVE LONG MAINTAINED THAT SEXUAL ORIENTATION, FAR FROM BEING A PERSONAL CHOICE, IS SOMETHING NEITHER CHOSEN NOR CHANGEABLE.





Rats have short estrous cycles. Every four days various glands in the rat's body start pumping estrogens, or female sex hormones, into the bloodstream, setting in motion a series of chemical events. Estrogen levels reach a certain concentration and stimulate part of the hypothalamus, the small portion of the brain that regulates (among other things) body temperature, hunger, thirst, and sexual drive. The hypothalamus in turn stimulates the pituitary gland; the pituitary then releases a burst of something called luteinizing hormone, which causes the ovary to release an egg. Barraclough discovered that in female rats even a single perinatal exposure to testosterone will prevent this entire process from ever occurring.

If that discovery was intriguing, a subsequent one was even more so: the discovery that male rats can ovulate—at least in the sense of going through the hormonal preliminaries. In 1965 Geoffrey Harris, a neuroendocrinologist at Oxford University, castrated a group of newborn male rats, depriving them of the testosterone from their testes. He found that if estrogen was injected into the bodies of these rats after they reached adulthood, it stimulated the hypothalamus, which initiated the sequence of hormone releases described above. The male rats obviously had no ovaries or wombs, but they went through the biochemical motions of ovulation. If one grafted an ovary onto a male rat, he would ovulate perfectly.

Further tests revealed a strange asymmetry. Whereas newborn male rats deprived of testosterone will, as Harris found, experience female-like ovulation, newborn female rats deprived of estrogen will continue to develop as females. In adulthood they will not seem somehow male. Although the rats' ovaries have been removed, their brains will still produce the stimulus to ovulate. Scientists realized that without testosterone the genetic blueprint for masculinity was essentially worthless. Indeed, they learned, for a male rat's brain to become truly organized as male, the rat must be exposed to testosterone within the first five days of life. After the fifth day the masculinizing window of opportunity is closed, and the genetic male will grow up with a "female" brain. In contrast, the brain of a female needs no estrogen for organization; left alone, it will become female.

Thus it came to be understood that what one might think of as the "default brain" for both sexes of the rat is feminine, and that testosterone is as necessary in the creation of a masculine brain as it is in the creation of masculine genitals. This concept, which is the basis of one approach to the neurobiological search for the origins of sexual orientation, is known as the "sexual differentiation of the brain."

Roger Gorski, a neurobiologist at the University of California at Los Angeles who has long been involved in research on sexual differentiation, looked back recently on the development of his field: "We spent much of our professional careers trying to understand this process of sexual differentiation, and what functions happen within it

—male sex behavior, female sex behavior, control of ovulation, control of food intake, body weight, aggressive behavior, some aspects of maternal behavior. You know why male dogs lift their legs when they pee? Because the brain has changed. So this is really a fundamental concept, that the brain is inherently female and to develop as male it must be exposed to masculinizing hormones.”

Several years after Harris’s experiment other researchers at Oxford University succeeded in confirming anatomically what the principle of the sexual differentiation of the brain had strongly implied: that an observable difference exists between the brains of male rats and those of female rats. In 1971 the anatomists Geoffrey Raisman and Pauline Field published a paper that compared the synapses, or connections between brain cells, in the hypothalamuses of male and female rats. The prevailing view at the time was that all structures of male and female brains were alike. Raisman and Field found that female and male rat brains differed in the number of synaptic connections between brain cells in the hypothalamus: females had more. Rat brains, which varied by sex in terms of function, also varied in terms of structural shape—were “sexually dimorphic.” In 1977 a team of neurobiologists led by Roger Gorski located a second sexual dimorphism, again in the rat hypothalamus: a small nucleus, or cluster of cells, five times larger in volume in the male rat than in the female. Gorski found that with the naked eye he could sex rats’ brains with almost 100 percent accuracy. Gorski’s team named the nucleus, logically, the sexually dimorphic nucleus. Its function is not known.

The groundwork had been laid in rodents. The next step was to see if sexual dimorphism of some kind could be found in the brains of human beings. In 1982 the cell biologist Christine de Lacoste-Utamsing and the physical anthropologist Ralph Holloway published in *Science* an examination of a structure in the human brain called the corpus callosum. The corpus callosum, which is made up of nerve fibers known as axons, is a long, narrow structure that connects and transmits information between the brain’s right and left hemispheres. It is one of the largest and most clearly identifiable portions of the brain, and has for years figured prominently in brain research. De Lacoste-Utamsing and Holloway found that the shape of a portion of the corpus callosum called the splenium differed so dramatically between the sexes, with the splenium being larger in women than in men, that impartial observers were able to sex brains easily by looking at this single feature. The De Lacoste-Utamsing

and Holloway study is well known and frequently cited, despite the failure of many of the attempts to replicate it. Whether the dimorphism found by De Lacoste-Utamsing and Holloway truly exists remains a matter of considerable debate.

In 1985, three years after the publication of the De Lacoste-Utamsing and Holloway article, Dick Swaab, a researcher at the Netherlands Institute for Brain Research, in Amsterdam, reported that he, too, had found evidence of sexual dimorphism in human brains—in the form of a human homologue of the sexually dimorphic nucleus that Gorski had found in rats.

Swaab announced an even more remarkable discovery five years later, in 1990. He had found, he wrote in an article in the journal *Brain Research*, that a cluster of cells in the human brain called the suprachiasmatic nucleus was dimorphic—but dimorphic according to sexual orientation rather than sex. Swaab said that the suprachiasmatic nucleus was nearly twice as large in homosexual men as it was in heterosexual men.

If true, this was something wholly new: an anatomical difference between homosexuals and heterosexuals.

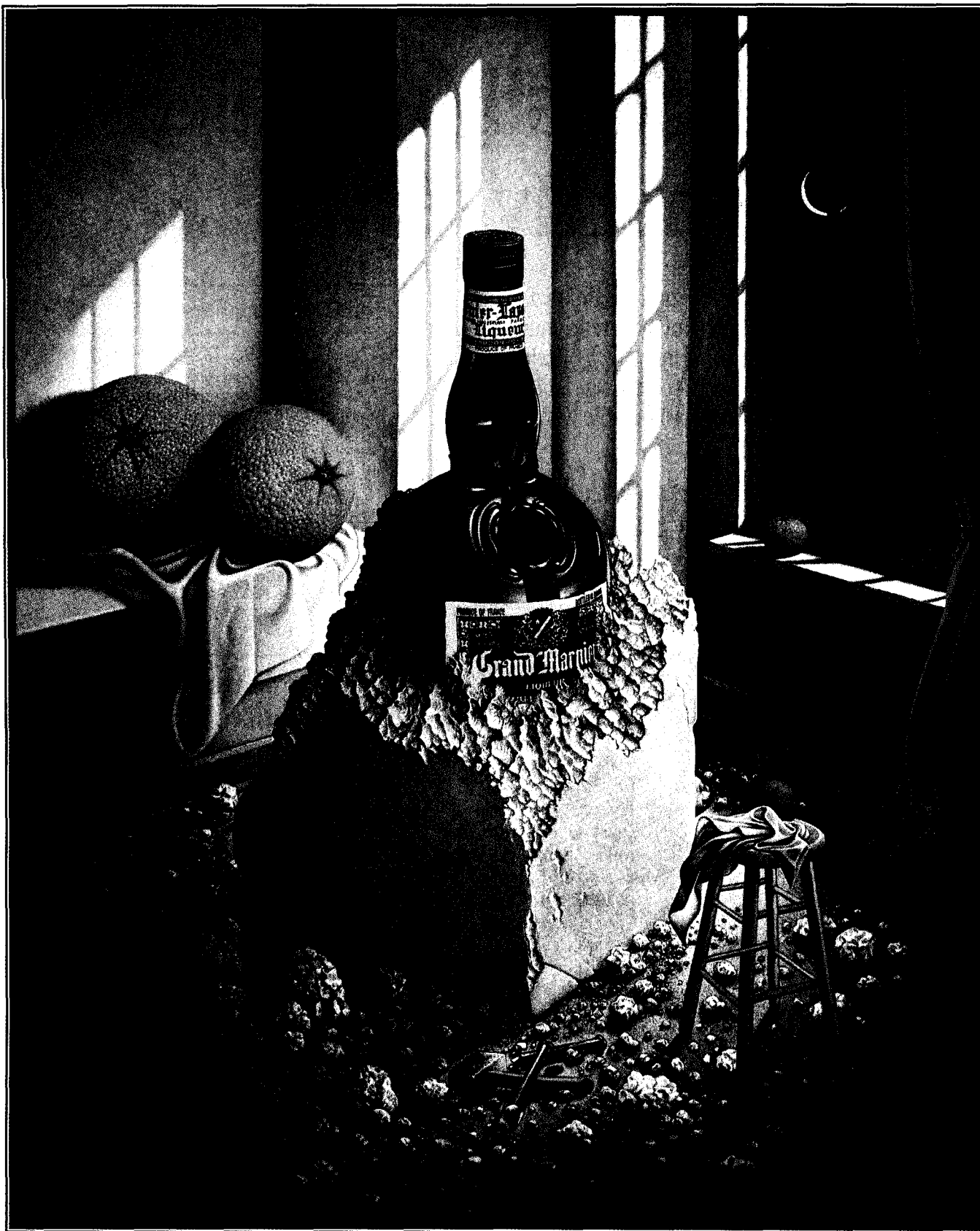
SIMON LEVAY IS A YOUNG NEUROBIOLOGIST WHO AT the time of Swaab’s second discovery was conducting research at the Salk Institute, in La Jolla, California. LeVay would soon become the author of what is surely the most publicized neurobiological article on ho-

moosexuality that has appeared to date. I spoke with him one day recently in his West Hollywood apartment. LeVay is a wiry, muscular man, remarkably intense. Perhaps the most striking thing about him is the way he talks. In a crisp British accent he zeroes in on each point and then moves on with an air of impatience.

“You shouldn’t draw such a distinction between biological and psychological mechanisms,” he chided me at one point during our conversation. “What people are really getting at is the difference between innately determined mechanisms and culturally determined mechanisms, but people screw that up and say that’s the difference between biology and psychology. It isn’t. It’s two different approaches for looking at the same thing: the mind. Biologists look at it from the bottom up, from the level of synapses and molecules, and psychologists are looking at it from the top down, at behavior and such.”

LeVay had been intrigued by Swaab’s research, but he was troubled by the fact that the portion of the brain ex-

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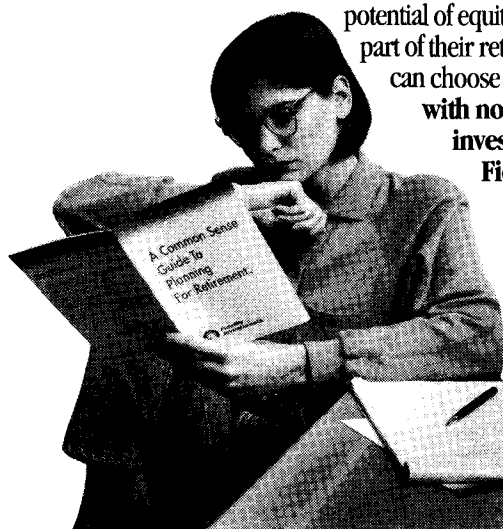
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amed by Swaab seemed to have nothing to do with the regulation of sexual behavior, at least not in animals. The suprachiasmatic nucleus governs the body's daily rhythms; dimorphism there according to sexual orientation might be provocative, certainly, but it would seem to constitute an effect, not a cause. Why not check out the hypothalamus, a region that is intimately involved with sexual behavior?

Laura Allen, a postdoctoral assistant in Gorski's laboratory, had identified four small groups of neurons in the anterior portion of the hypothalamus, naming them the interstitial nuclei of the anterior hypothalamus (INAH) 1, 2, 3, and 4. Allen's research had shown that INAH 2 and INAH 3 were sexually dimorphic in human beings—significantly larger in men than in women. Was it possible that these nuclei were dimorphic according to sexual orientation as well? That was the focus of LeVay's research, and he presented his conclusions in a short paper titled "A Difference in Hypothalamic Structure Between Heterosexual and Homosexual Men." It was published in *Science* in August of 1991. In the introduction LeVay defined sexual orientation as "the direction of sexual feelings or behavior toward members of one's own or the op-

posite sex" and hypothesized that Allen's INAH nuclei were involved in the generation of "male-typical sexual behavior." He went on,

I tested the idea that one or both of these nuclei exhibit a size dimorphism, not with sex, but with sexual orientation. Specifically, I hypothesized that INAH 2 or INAH 3 is large in individuals sexually oriented toward women (heterosexual men and homosexual women) and small in individuals sexually oriented toward men (heterosexual women and homosexual men).

LeVay dissected brain tissue obtained from routine autopsies of forty-one people who had died at hospitals in New York and California. There were nineteen homosexual men, all of whom had died of AIDS; sixteen presumed heterosexual men, six of whom had been intravenous drug abusers and had died of AIDS; and six presumed heterosexual women. No brain tissue from lesbians was available. LeVay's conclusions included the following:

INAH 3 did exhibit dimorphism. . . . [T]he volume of this nucleus was more than twice as large in the heterosexual men . . . as in the homosexual men. . . . There was a similar difference between the heterosexual men and the women. . . . These data support the hypothesis that INAH 3 is dimorphic not with sex but with sexual orientation, at least in men.

The results were sufficiently clear to LeVay to allow him to state, "The discovery that a nucleus differs in size between heterosexual and homosexual men illustrates that sexual orientation in humans is amenable to study at the biological level."

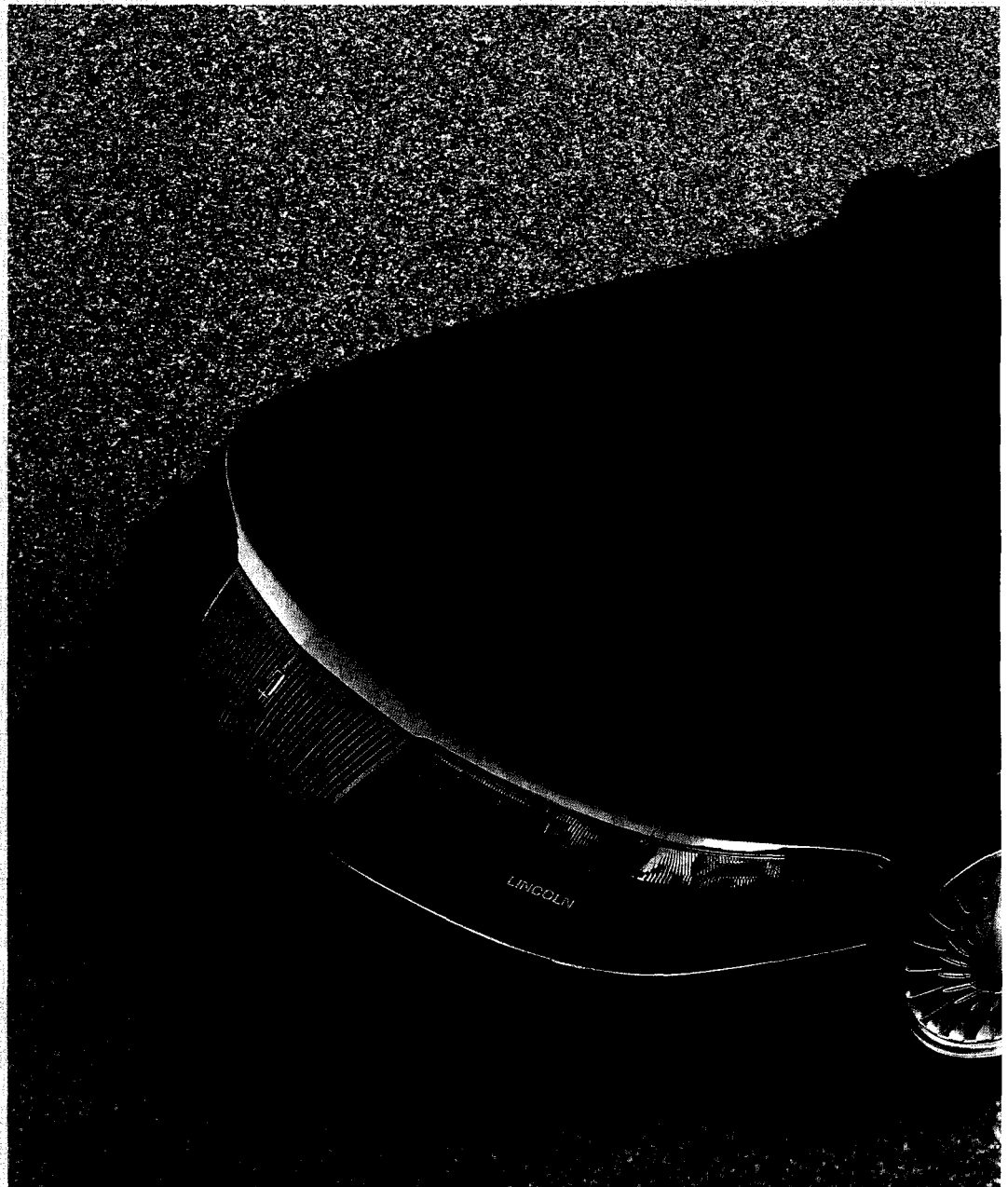
The study, as LeVay himself readily admits, has several problems: a small sample group, great variation in individual nucleus size, and possibly skewed results because all the gay men had AIDS (although LeVay found "no significant difference in the volume of INAH 3 between the heterosexual men who died of AIDS and those who died of other causes"). As of this writing, LeVay's findings have yet to be replicated by other researchers. LeVay himself has extended his search for dimorphism according to sexual orientation to the corpus callosum, which he is studying by means of magnetic-resonance imaging. Until his original findings are confirmed, the notion that homosexuals and heterosexuals are in some way anatomically distinct must hold the status of tantalizing supposition.

It needs also to be remembered that, as noted earlier, the issue of dimorphism of any kind in the brain is hotly contested. The idea that the brains of heterosexuals and homosexuals may be different morphologically is derived from the idea that the brains of men and women are different morphologically—recall the corpus callosum study by De Lacoste-Utamsing and Holloway. But that study is itself problematic, efforts to replicate it having turned up inconsistent results. Anne Fausto-Sterling is a developmental geneticist at Brown University. She, along with

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died of starvation
because the leaves
had fallen
from the trees
because
the air was
getting colder
so the snipers
could more easily see
the few remaining people
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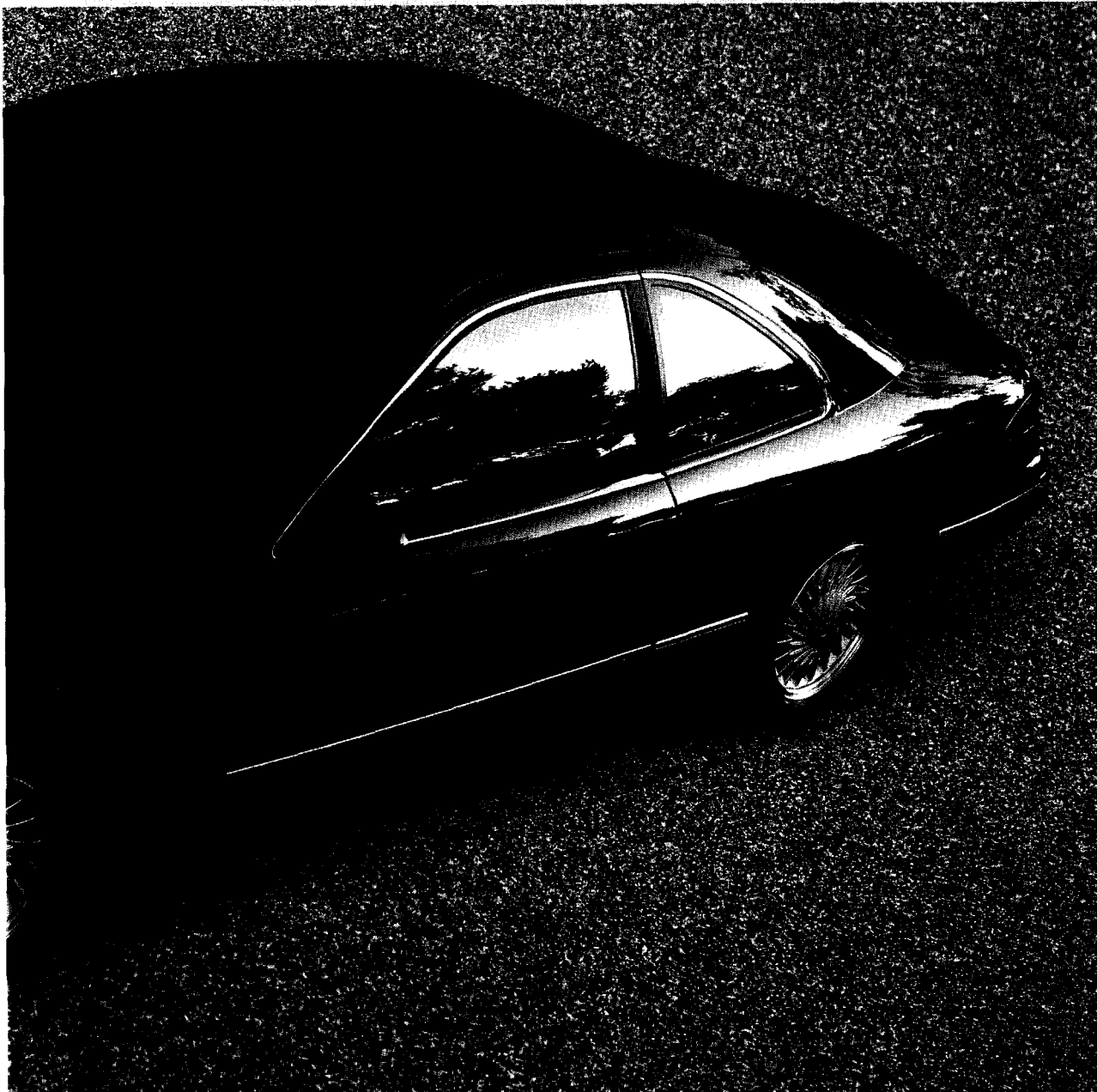
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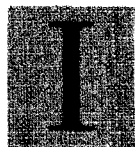


LINCOLN MARK VIII
What A Luxury Car Should Be

William Byne, a neurobiologist and psychiatrist at Columbia University, has been among the chief critics of neurobiological investigations of homosexuality. Fausto-Sterling during an interview not long ago itemized some of the results from a long line of attempts to replicate sexual dimorphism: "1985: no sex differences in shape, width, or area. 1988: three independent observers unable to distinguish male from female. 1989: women had smaller callosal areas but larger percent of area in splenium, more-slimmer CCs, and more-bulbous splenium." A new corpus callosum study by Laura Allen, conducted in 1991, *did* find sexual dimorphism—and the debate continues. Part of the difficulty is methodological, involving whose brains are being compared, and how. Dead people or living people? Old or young or mixed? Healthy or sick? By means of brain sections or magnetic-resonance imaging? LeVay calls studies of the corpus callosum "the longest-running soap opera in neurobiology." And, of course, he himself is now part of the cast.

Even if LeVay's hypothalamus study stands up to scrutiny, it will not justify drawing extravagant conclusions. Establishing a distinction is not the same thing as finding a cause. Anatomy is not etiology, but it may offer a starting point for a journey backward in search of the ultimate origins of sexual orientation. That journey takes us into the realm of hormones and genetics.

The Puzzles of Chemistry



IN A LARGE ROOM AT THE UCLA DEPARTMENT of anatomy, Roger Gorski and I recently stood facing a dozen black-topped lab tables, each below a ceiling-mounted video monitor. We were about to watch a tape of rats having sex.

Gorski, an eternally cheerful, almost elfin man of fifty-seven, was energetically describing the tape. "There are six couples," he explained, though at the moment I saw only one uninterested-looking white rat. "That's an unaltered female," he said. "They're going to put in another female that has been injected with testosterone." Sure enough, someone's hand reached down into the screen and a second rat landed in the cage. The rats at first edged around each other, but in just a few seconds on the dozen monitors I saw the testosterone-injected female begin to sniff the other female rat and then mount her aggressively. At the lab tables a handful of medical students went on with their work, paying no attention. After a few moments the tape cut to two males, one perinatally castrated and injected with estrogen, one unaltered. After some initial maneuvering the castrated male responded to the advances of the unaltered male by bending his back and offering himself in what was to me indistinguishable from female-rat lordosis—behavior indicating receptivity to sex, pictures of which Gorski had shown me in his office. The altered rat submitted as the other male mounted him. The tape continued with similar scenes. It was quite dramatic.

Such research in animals has led to hypotheses that hormones are, in some way, a cause of homosexuality in human beings. No one, of course, suggests that the sexuality of rats and that of human beings are strictly comparable; some critics of neurobiological research on homosexuality question the utility of animal models entirely. Nonetheless, it was investigations involving animals that got researchers thinking.

Of the scientists who have concentrated on hormonal or psychoendocrinological studies of homosexuality, Günter Dörner, of Germany, is one of the best known. In the 1970s Dörner classified homosexuality as a "central nervous pseudohermaphroditism," meaning that he considered male homosexuals to have brains with the mating centers of women but, of course, the bodies of men. For decades endocrinologists had speculated that because male sex hormones are known to be responsible in human beings for masculine body characteristics and in animals for certain aspects of male sexual behavior, it follows that adult homosexual men should have lower levels of testosterone, or else higher levels of estrogen, in the bloodstream than adult heterosexual men, and that homosexual and heterosexual women should display the opposite pattern. This is known as the "adult hormonal theory" of sexual orientation, and Dörner claimed that some initial studies bore it out.

In 1984 Heino Meyer-Bahlburg, a neurobiologist at Columbia University, analyzed the results of twenty-seven studies undertaken to test the theory. According to Meyer-Bahlburg, a score of the studies in fact showed no difference between the testosterone or estrogen levels of homosexual and heterosexual men. Three studies did show that homosexuals had significantly lower levels of testosterone, but Meyer-Bahlburg believed that two of them were methodologically unsound and that the third was tainted by psychotropic drug use on the part of its subjects. Two studies actually reported higher levels of testosterone in homosexual men than in heterosexual men, and one unhelpfully showed the levels to be higher in bisexuals than in either heterosexuals or homosexuals.

AS IT CAME TO BE WIDELY ACCEPTED THAT ADULT hormone levels were not a factor in sexual orientation, scientists shifted their attention to prenatal hormone exposure. Many of the glands in a human being's hormone system are busily functioning even before birth—tiny hormone factories that produce the chemicals that help to mold the person who will eventually emerge. Perhaps, it was thought, different levels of prenatal hormones produce different sexual orientations. For obvious reasons, the sometimes brutal hormonal experiments done on monkeys and rats cannot be done on human beings, but nature at times provides a narrow window onto the mysteries of prenatal hormonal effects in ourselves.

Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) has been called

by Meyer-Bahlburg a "model endocrine syndrome" for examining the effects of abnormal amounts of prenatal sex hormones. CAH, which can affect both males and females, is caused by a simple problem: an enzyme defect makes it impossible for a fetus's adrenal gland to produce cortisol, an important hormone. In a normal fetus, as the adrenal gland produces cortisol, the brain stands by patiently, waiting for the signals that the cortisol level is appropriately high and production can be shut off. But in CAH fetuses, which lack the enzyme to create cortisol, the brain doesn't get those signals, and so it orders the adrenal gland to continue production. The adrenal gland continues pumping out what it thinks is cortisol, but it is unknowingly producing masculinizing androgens. It dumps these into the fetus's system, thereby overexposing it to male hormones.

The consequences are most dramatic in females. Once, in his office, Roger Gorski dug into a desk drawer and grabbed a few photographs. "What sex is it?" he asked. I squinted at close-ups of a child's genitals and saw a penis, plain as day. "It's a boy," I said confidently. Gorski's eyebrows shot up. "Where are the testicles?" he asked. I looked closer. Oops.

This was a CAH baby. In this case, Gorski told me, the doctors had decided at the time of birth that the child was a boy with undescended testicles, a relatively common and minor condition. But in fact I was looking at a genetic female.

With surgery a CAH female's external genitals can be made to look feminine, as her internal apparatus already fully is, and she will be raised as a girl. But hormones may have already had their effect in an area that plastic surgery cannot touch: the brain. Or at least so proponents of the prenatal-hormone theory of sexual orientation would argue. The sexual orientation of CAH females tends to bear them out. A 1984 study by the Johns Hopkins University sex researcher John Money found that 37 percent of CAH women identified themselves as lesbian or bisexual; the current estimate of the proportion of lesbians in the general female population is from two to four percent.

One possible clue as to whether the prenatal-hormone theory of sexual orientation is a profitable line of inquiry involves something called luteinizing-hormone (LH) feedback. The brain releases several hormones, including LH, which initiate the development of an egg in a woman's ovary. As the egg develops, the ovary releases increasing amounts of estrogen, stimulating the brain to produce more LH, which in turn promotes the production of still more estrogen. The process is called positive feed-

back. In men, estrogen usually acts to suppress the production of luteinizing hormone—it results in *negative* feedback. These differences in LH feedback in human beings, together with the discovery that male rats hormonally altered after birth will display both positive LH feedback and same-sex sexual behavior, led some researchers to a hypothesis. They speculated that gay men, their brains presumably not organized prenatally by testicular hormones, just as women's are not, would show a positive LH feedback, like that of a heterosexual female, rather than the negative feedback of the typical heterosexual male. If such feedback were to be found consistently in homosexual

men—by means of chemical analysis of the blood after injection with estrogen—could this not be taken as evidence that some decisive prenatal hormonal event, with important bearing on subsequent sexual orientation, had indeed occurred?

This line of inquiry has given rise to an active field of study that as yet has lit-

tle to show for itself. The uncertainties are of two kinds. The first one involves the following question: Do LH feedback patterns of the sort being sought in fact exist in human beings? The second comes down to this: Even if LH feedback patterns of the sort being sought do exist, will they really tell us anything about events that occurred before birth? Unfortunately, neuroscientists lack unequivocal answers to both questions, despite considerable efforts. Different studies have yielded conflicting data. No one has yet come up with what one neurobiologist facetiously terms a "gay blood test."

In an article published in 1990 in the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology*, Heino Meyer-Bahlberg surveyed the work done so far on hormonal research in general and concluded: "The evidence available to date is inconsistent, most studies are methodologically unsatisfactory, and alternative interpretations of the results cannot be ruled out." On the other hand, Meyer-Bahlberg went on, "not all potential avenues to a psychoendocrine explanation of homosexuality have been exhausted."

Among the unexhausted avenues is one being explored by Richard Pillard.

A PSYCHIATRIST AT THE BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL of Medicine, Richard Pillard is a tall, pleasant man in his fifties with a neatly trimmed moustache and a relaxed manner. Even when talking seriously, he remains good-natured. When we spoke one afternoon in his Boston townhouse, he joked that he is uniquely

THE RATS AT FIRST EDGED AROUND EACH OTHER, BUT IN JUST A FEW SECONDS ON THE DOZEN MONITORS I SAW THE TESTOSTERONE-INJECTED FEMALE BEGIN TO SNIFF THE OTHER FEMALE RAT AND THEN MOUNT HER AGGRESSIVELY.

equipped to investigate whether homosexuality has a biological basis: he, his brother, and his sister are gay, and Pillard believes that his father may have been gay. One of Pillard's three daughters from a marriage early in life is bisexual. This family history seems to invite a biological explanation, and it made Pillard start thinking about the origins of sexual orientation.

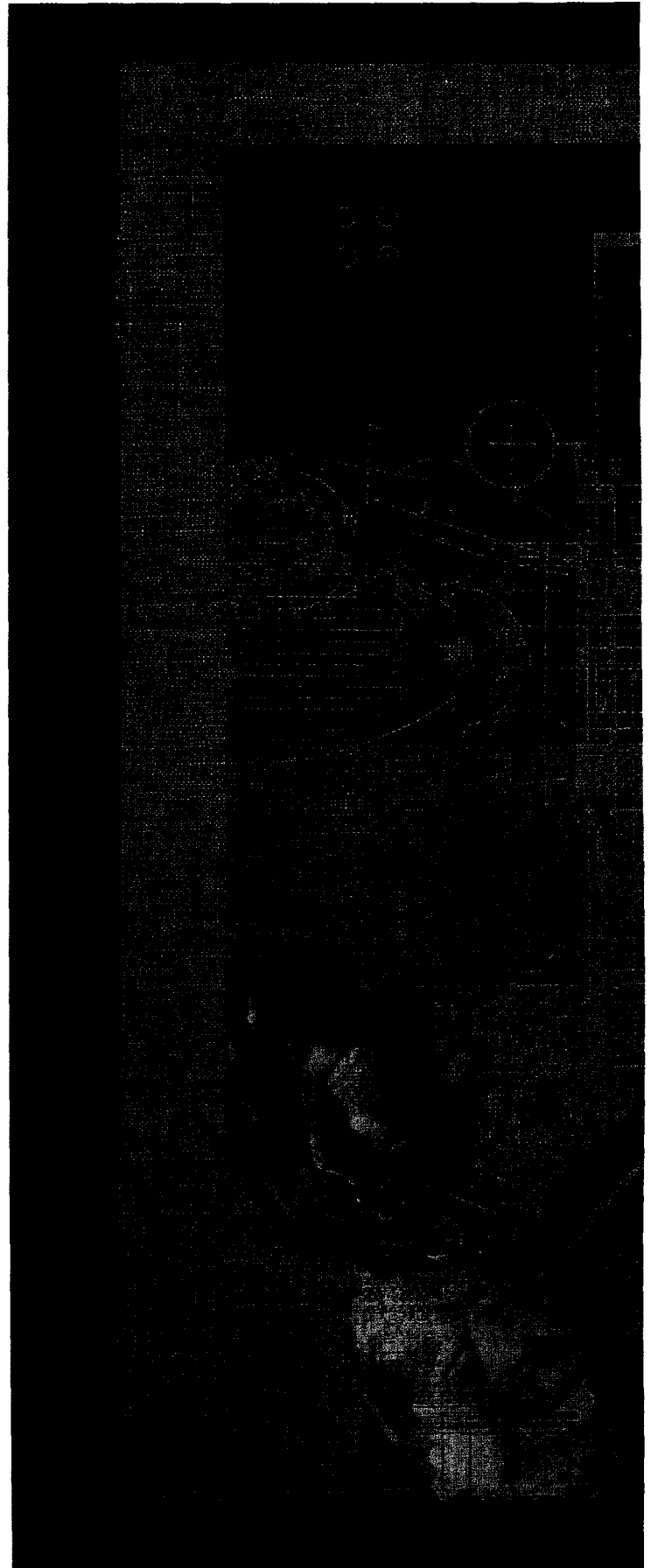
Pillard says that it had long puzzled him why transsexuals—men or women who wish to live in bodies of the opposite sex—are so different from gay people: “You’d think they’d be on the far end of the spectrum, the ‘gay-est of the gay.’” And yet transsexuals are not in fact gay. Whereas gay men, quite comfortably and unalterably, see themselves as men, male transsexuals see themselves as women trapped in men’s bodies. Pillard and a colleague, James Weinrich, a psychobiologist at the University of California at San Diego, began to theorize that gay men are men who in the womb went through only a partial form of sexual and psychosexual differentiation. More precisely, Pillard and Weinrich theorized that although gay men do undergo masculinization—they are, after all, fully male physically—they go incompletely if at all through another part of the process: defeminization.

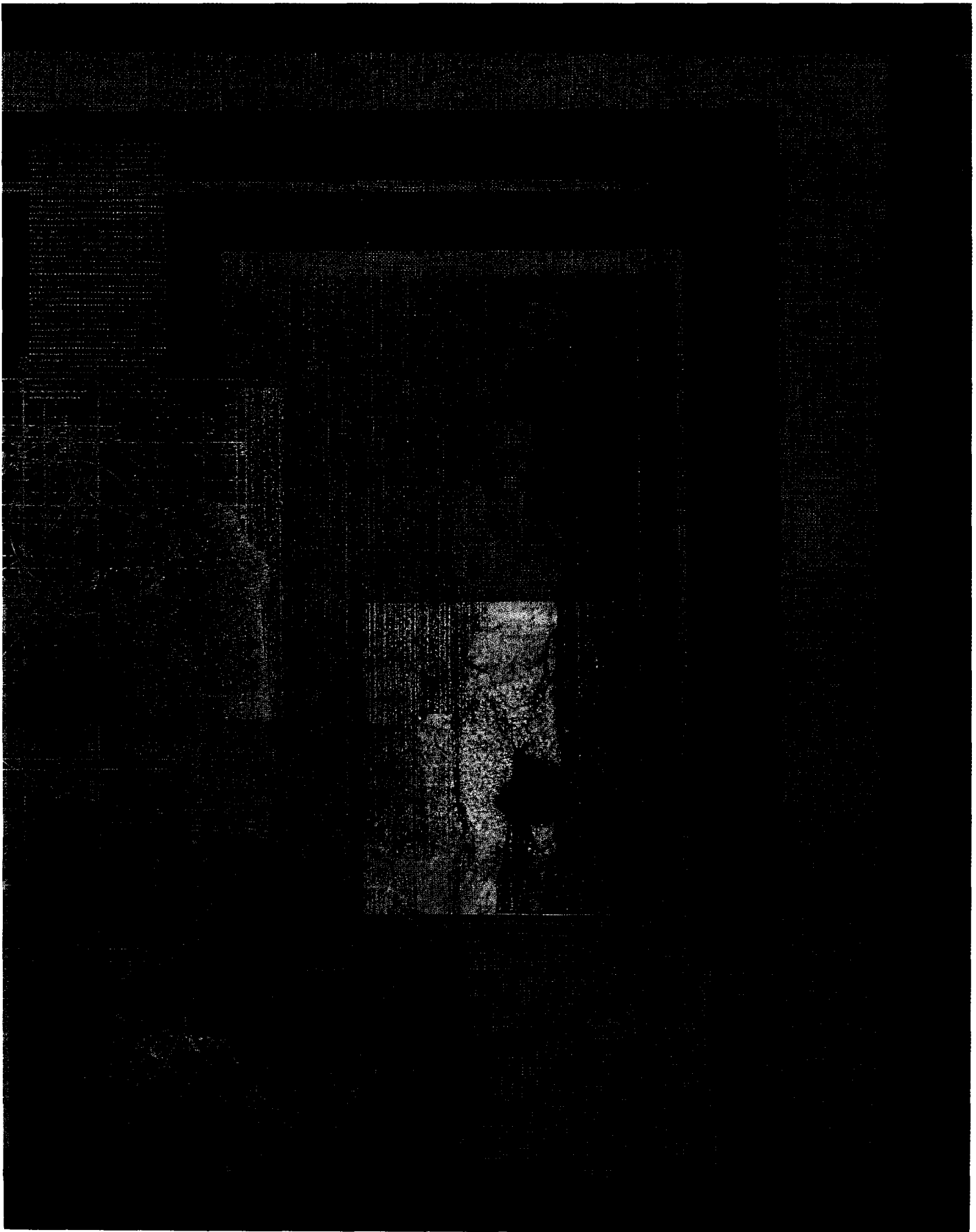
As fetuses, Pillard points out, human beings of both sexes start out with complete female and male “anlages,” or precursors of the basic interior sexual equipment—vagina, uterus, and fallopian tubes for women, and vas deferens, seminal vesicles, and ejaculatory ducts for men. These packages are called the Müllerian (female) and Wolffian (male) ducts, and are tubes of tissue located in the lower abdomen. How do the sexual organs develop? It happens differently in men and women.

At the moment of conception an embryo is given its chromosomal sex, which determines whether it will develop testes or ovaries. In female human beings (as in female rats) the female structures will simply develop, without any help from hormones; the Wolffian duct will shrivel up. The process of becoming male, however, is more complex. Where women need none, men need two kinds of hormones: androgens from the testes to prompt the Wolffian duct into development, and a second substance, called Müllerian inhibiting hormone, to suppress the Müllerian duct and defeminize the male fetus.

Pillard speculates that Müllerian inhibiting hormone, or a substance analogous to it, may have brain-organizing effects. Its absence or failure to kick in sufficiently may prevent the brain from defeminizing, thereby creating what Pillard calls “psychosexual androgyny.” In this view, gay men are basically masculine males with female aspects, including perhaps certain cognitive abilities and emotional sensibilities. Lesbian women could be understood as women who have some biologically induced masculine aspects.

An experimental basis is provided by research by the psychiatrist Richard Green, of the University of California at Los Angeles, which shows that children who man-





ifest aspects of gender-atypical play are often gay. Green has concluded that an inclination toward gender-atypical play in prepubescent boys—for example, dressing in women's clothes, playing with dolls, or taking the role of the mother when playing house—indicates a homosexual orientation 75 percent of the time. If that is true, it is important, because it would be an example of a trait linked to sexual orientation which does not involve sexual behavior—suggesting how deeply rooted sexual orientation is. Discussing this line of research, Simon LeVay told me, “It’s well known from animal work that sex-typical play behavior is under hormonal control. Robert Goy [at the University of Wisconsin at Madison] has done many studies over the years showing that you can reverse the sex-typical play behavior of infant monkeys by hormonal manipulations in prenatal life. [Play] is an example of a sex-reversed trait in gay people that’s not directly related to sex. It’s not sex, it’s play. When you get to adulthood, these things become blurred. It’s easier to tell a gay kid than a gay adult—kids are much of a muchness. Most gay men, even those who are very macho as adults, recall at least some gender-atypical behavior as children.”

The Pillard-Weinrich theory also accords with what Green refers to as male “vulnerability” during the process of sexual differentiation. A considerably larger number of male embryos come into existence than female embryos, and yet males and females come into the world in about the same numbers. Therefore, phenomena linked to sex must reduce the number of males who survive to term. Many disorders are, in fact, more common in men than women, and some of these could result from problems originating in masculine differentiation. Although good statistics do not exist, it appears that there may be two gay men for every gay woman, which would be consistent with the vulnerability theory.

It is important to remember that although homosexuals and heterosexuals may be “sex-reversed” in some ways, in other ways they are not. For example, neither gay nor straight men tend to be confused on the subject of what sex they are: male. LeVay says, “It’s not just that you look down and see you have a penis and you say, ‘Oh, I’m a boy. Great.’ I think there must be some internal representation of what sex you are, independent of these external signals like the appearance of your body. I think most gay men are aware of some degree of femininity in themselves, yet there is no reversal of gender identity.” Gay men and straight men also seem to display an identi-

cal strong drive for multiple sexual partners; lesbians and straight women seem to be alike in favoring fewer sexual partners.

The evidence from hormonal research may circumstantially implicate biology in sexual orientation, but it is far from conclusive. William Byne raises a warning flag: “If the prenatal-hormone hypothesis were correct, then one might expect to see in a large proportion of homosexuals evidence of prenatal endocrine disturbance, such as genital or gonadal abnormalities. But we simply don’t find this.” Moreover, the hormonal research does not answer the question of ultimate cause. If hormones help to influence sexual orientation, what is influencing the hormones?

The Genetic Quest

 IN 1963 KULBIR GILL, A VISITING SCIENTIST from India working at Yale University, was conducting research into genetic causes of female sterility. His experiments involved exposing the fruit fly *Drosophila melanogaster*, that workhorse of genetic research, to X-rays, and observing the behavior of the resulting offspring. Gill noticed that a certain group of mutant male flies were courting other males, following each other and vibrating their wings to make characteristic courtship “songs.” Gill published his findings in a short note in the publication *Drosophila Information Service* and then returned to the question of female sterility.

A decade later Jeffrey Hall, a biologist at Brandeis University, followed up on Gill’s odd discovery. Every discovered *Drosophila* gene mutation is given a name, and Gill had called his mutation “fruity.” Hall, considering this name to be denigrating, redubbed it, still somewhat tongue-in-cheek, “fruitless.” Hall ex-

plains that the fruitless mutation produces two distinct behaviors. First, fruitless-bearing male flies, unlike non-mutant male flies, actively court other males as well as females, although for reasons that remain poorly understood, they are unable actually to achieve intercourse with members of either sex. Second, fruitless-bearing males elicit and are receptive to courtship *from* other males, which nonmutant males reject.

Fruit flies can live for two or three months, and this “bisexual” fly strain has existed behaviorally unchanged through hundreds of generations. Some gene mutations are lethal to flies; fruitless is not one of these, nor does it cause illness. It is, Hall says, a nonpathological genetic mutation that causes a consistent, complex behavior. And

ILLARD AND WEINRICH THEORIZED THAT ALTHOUGH GAY MEN DO UNDERGO MASCULINIZATION—THEY ARE, AFTER ALL, FULLY MALE PHYSICALLY—THEY GO INCOMPLETELY IF AT ALL THROUGH ANOTHER PART OF THE PROCESS: DEFEMINIZATION.



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fruitless displays an anatomical sexual dimorphism, bringing LeVay's study to mind. In the abdomen of male *Drosophila* flies there is a muscle, the so-called muscle of Lawrence, whose function is unknown; female fruit flies don't have it, and neither do fruitless males.

Although fruitless flies don't mate, the perpetuation of the fruitless trait is made possible by the fact that it is recessive—a full pair of the mutations is needed for fruitless behavior to be expressed. When males that carry a single fruitless gene mate with a fruitless-carrying female, a percentage of their offspring will carry the full pair and display typical fruitless behavior. If a genetic component of homosexuality in human beings exists, it could possibly operate by means of a comparable mechanism.

Angela Pattatucci, a geneticist at the National Institutes of Health, gave me a demonstration a few months ago in her lab. She took a small glass container of tiny *Drosophila* flies, popped off the top, and plugged an ether-soaked cotton ball into the mouth. Within a few seconds the flies were lying stunned on the glass floor. Using a plastic stick Pattatucci separated out a few of the flies into a larger glass jar. I looked at a group of males and females through a microscope, their bodies vibrating, red eyes bulging. Pattatucci showed me how to differentiate the genitalia at the end of the abdomen—smooth and light-colored for females, furry and dark for males.

Pattatucci said that researchers are relatively close to finding the actual fruitless gene. It is already known that fruitless is located physically on the right arm of the third chromosome. After establishing the precise location (or locations) of the mutation, researchers can determine the sequence of biochemical information in fruitless's genetic code—the order of thousands of units of the basic genetic components adenine, thymine, guanine, and cytosine. Once the combination is known, the search can begin for a similar combination—a fruitless analogue—in human beings.

In the jar the males, separated out, eventually came back to awareness. "Watch that one," Pattatucci said, pointing to a fly that had come up behind another fly, vibrating his wings in courtship. He then climbed on top of the male he was courting. I watched the two flies, one atop the other, the one on the bottom wandering around as if a bit bored. As noted, for a fruitless fly that is as far as things can go.

I once asked Jeffrey Hall if courtship alone could be satisfying for a fly. "Could be," he said. "Maybe it's delicious, maybe he's frustrated. But this becomes ludicrous. How do you know when a fruit fly is frustrated?" It is an important point: the danger of anthropomorphizing insect behavior is great, and I found myself doing it almost by reflex when watching Pattatucci's flies. How can we equate fly behavior with a vast something that in human beings generates aesthetic and intellectual perceptions—with something that encompasses emotional need and love and the pain of love? So Hall is careful to describe

fruitless as "a mutation that leads to a mimic of bisexuality." He is skeptical that finding a fruitless analogue will lead to a full explanation of human homosexuality. DNA analogues for all sorts of fruit-fly genes do exist in human beings, and the process of looking for them is relatively straightforward. But, as Hall points out, "it is very unlikely that the genetics of homosexuality will ever devolve to a single factor in humans with such major effects as it has in *Drosophila*."

WHEN BIOLOGISTS ARE INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING whether genetics is involved in the appearance of certain characteristics or conditions, one obvious place to look is among people who are closely related to one another. In "A Genetic Study of Male Sexual Orientation," a study that has now achieved almost as much renown as LeVay's, the Northwestern University psychologist Michael Bailey and Boston University's Richard Pillard compared fifty-six "monozygotic" twins (identical twins, from the same zygote, or fertilized egg), fifty-four "dizygotic" (fraternal) twins, and fifty-seven genetically unrelated adopted brothers. Identical twins are important in sexual-orientation research because, of course, they have identical genomes, including the sex-chromosome pair. If homosexuality is largely genetic in origin, then the more closely related that people are, the greater should be the concordance of their sexual orientation.

That is, in fact, what the study found. Bailey and Pillard reported a gay-gay concordance rate of 11 percent for the adoptive brothers, 22 percent for the dizygotic twins, and 52 percent for the monozygotic twins. The findings suggest that homosexuality is highly attributable to genetics—by some measures up to 70 percent attributable, according to Pillard. This figure is based on something geneticists call "heritability," a painstakingly calculated indicator of how much genes have to do with a given variation among people. If heritability is less than 100 percent, then the characteristic being studied is by definition "multifactorial." Eye color is 100 percent dependent on genetics. Height, on the other hand, though about 90 percent genetic, is also affected by nutrition, and thus is multifactorial.

If a large contribution to homosexuality comes from genes, where does the rest of it come from? The range of environmental and biological inputs a developing child receives is both enormous and enormously complex. "Whatever the other variables are," Pillard says, "they must be present early in life. I think this because the gender-atypical behavior that so strongly prefigures an adult homosexual orientation can be observed early in development." And he goes on: "There certainly could be different paths to the same outcome. With individual cases, there are doubtless some that are mostly or all genes, and others that might be all environment. Our analysis [of twins] doesn't say anything about the individual." Jeffrey Hall can be so

underwhelmed by the prospect of finding a human analogue of the fruitless mutation because, as he points out, if we do find it, we still will not have fully accounted for the etiology of homosexuality even in identical twins. "You will effectively know nothing from this genetic knowledge," Hall says. A behavior as simple as jumping, he notes, is quite complex genetically, having to do with all kinds of genes and other, unknown factors. He says, "We are not about to create a genetic surgical procedure which makes you Michael Jordan." LeVay made the same point in the course of our conversation: "It's one thing to say that genes are involved, as they almost certainly are. It's a whole other thing to actually identify those genes, because homosexuality may be polygenic, with each gene having a small effect."

Whatever the uncertainties ahead, though, the important point is that the genetic work is already fairly compelling. A new Bailey and Pillard genetic study of lesbian twins, to be published soon in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, echoes the researchers' original male-twin findings with strikingly similar results. "We're getting a lot of consistency where we should be getting it," Bailey says.

The most interesting question is perhaps becoming not *whether* genetics plays a role in homosexuality but *how*. Why does nature preserve genes that influence sexual behavior and yet do not facilitate reproduction? Does less than 100 percent heritability mean that the Bailey and Pillard study is incompatible with a bipolar model of sexual orientation? In his study LeVay defined homosexuality in terms of the sex of a person's sexual-object choice: *either* men or women, *either* homosexual or heterosexual. Pillard and Bailey's multifactorial model suggests a shaded continuum of sexual orientations, and of origins and causes, more complex and subtle than a simple either-or model can accommodate, and closer to what may be the quirks and ambiguities of our real lives.

The Ramifications of Science



WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? AS WE HAVE SEEN, scientists must sift for their conclusions through ambiguous results from a disparate group of studies that are excruciatingly difficult to interpret. Yet even at this relatively early date, out of the web of complexities it is becoming ever clearer that biological factors play a role in determining human sexual orientation. Richard Green said to me, "I suspect that at least in your lifetime we will

find a gene that contributes substantially to sexual orientation." Michael Bailey says, "I would—and have—bet my career on homosexuality's being biologically determined." The pace of neurobiological and genetic research is only increasing.

The search is not without its opponents. Some, recalling earlier psychiatric "treatments" for homosexuality, discern in the biological quest the seeds of genocide. They conjure up the specter of the surgical or chemical "rewiring" of gay people, or of abortions of fetal homosexuals who have been hunted down in the womb. "I think all of us working in this field," Pattatucci says, "have delusions of grandeur in thinking we can control the way this knowledge will be used." Certainly the potential for abuse is there, but that is true of much biomedical knowledge. It is no reason to forswear knowledge of ourselves, particularly when the potential benefits are great.

Some of the benefits could be indirect. Laura Allen points out, for ex-

ample, that there are many now-mysterious diseases—autism, dyslexia, schizophrenia—that affect men and women differently, hiding inside parts of the human mind and body that we cannot penetrate. Neurobiological research into sexual differentiation may help us to understand and cure these diseases, as well as to unlock other mysteries—the mysteries of sexuality.

And then there is the question with which we began—that of the acceptance of gay people in American society. The challenge posed by homosexuality is one of inclusion, and, as Evelyn Hooker would say, the facts must be allowed to speak. Five decades of psychiatric evidence demonstrates that homosexuality is immutable, and nonpathological, and a growing body of more recent evidence implicates biology in the development of sexual orientation.

Some would ask: How can one justify discriminating against people on the basis of such a characteristic? And many would answer: One cannot. Yet it would be wise to acknowledge that science can be a rickety platform on which to erect an edifice of rights. Science can enlighten, can instruct, can expose the mythologies we sometimes live by. It can make objective distinctions—as, for example, between sexual pathology on the one hand and sexual orientation on the other. But we cannot rely on science to supply full answers to fundamental questions involving human rights, human freedom, and human tolerance. The issue of gay people in American life did not arise in the laboratory. The principles needed to resolve it will not arise there either. □

IF A LARGE CONTRIBUTION TO HOMOSEXUALITY COMES FROM GENES, WHERE DOES THE REST OF IT COME FROM? THE RANGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL INPUTS A DEVELOPING CHILD RECEIVES IS BOTH ENORMOUS AND ENORMOUSLY COMPLEX.

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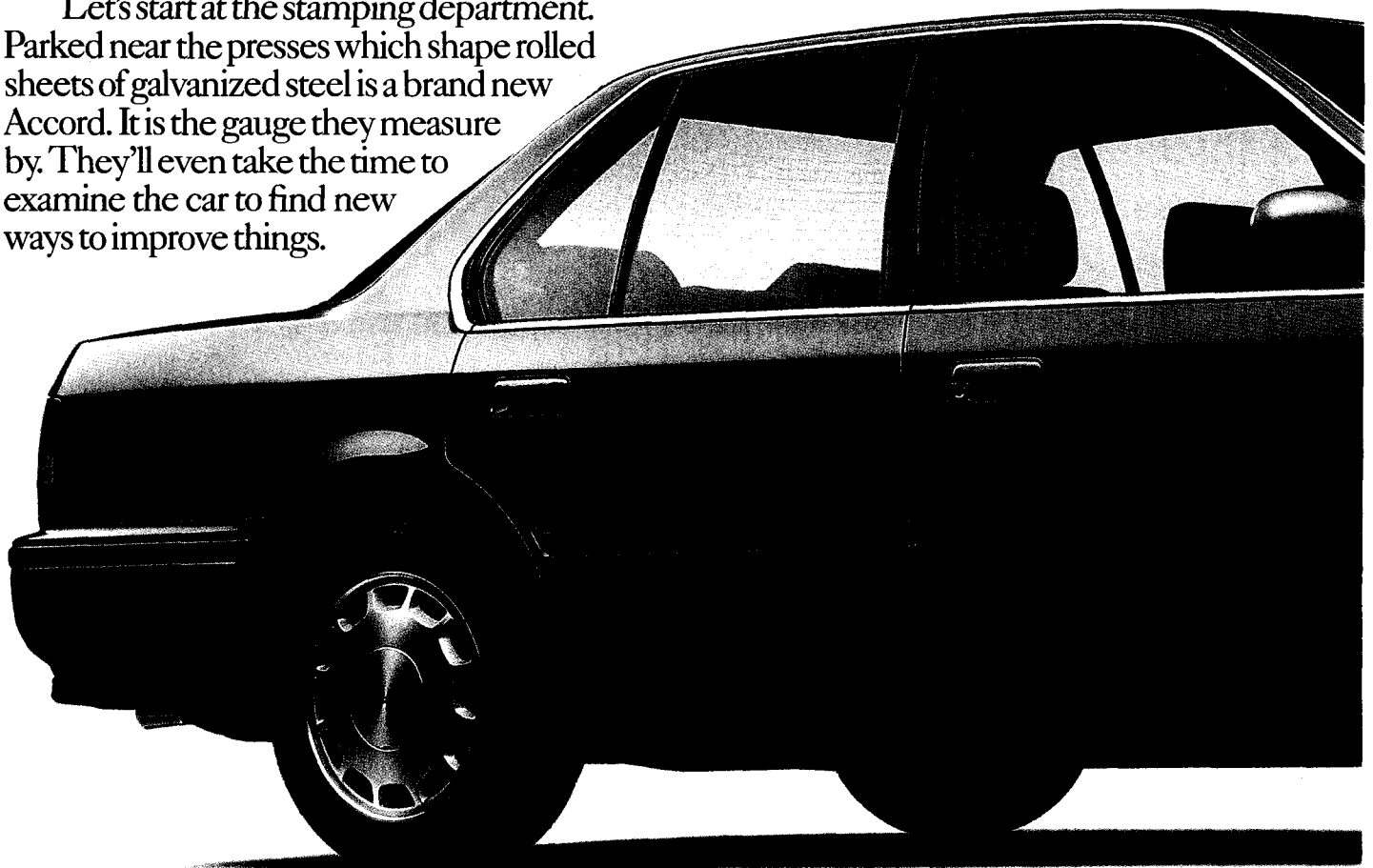
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A Short Story



A Half Hour With God's Heroes

by Ralph Lombreglia

JOSEPHINE ASSUMED SHE'D FIND THE SHRINE IN A wooded glen down a private road. She expected a quiet place with a statue of the Virgin or a plaque recounting a miraculous event the trees had witnessed decades before, when a girl named Rose felt herself summoned down the path, a little crippled girl known far and wide for her special devotion to Our Lady . . . something along those lines. A shrine. And the gift shop, Josephine's real interest, would be a modest, shedlike affair with a nun inside selling beads and figurines. So Josephine imagined; her ex-mother-in-law, Camilla, hadn't described the shrine, and Josephine hadn't asked.

She grossly underestimated the zeal of the faithful in Massachusetts. She was driving along, paying more attention to Camilla's directions than to the snowbanked road, certain she'd missed a turn and looking for a place to pull off, when, coming around a bend, she slammed on her brakes and fishtailed down the mercifully dry pavement, skidding to a halt three feet from the last car in a good-half-mile-long line of cars ahead of her. The traffic jam wasn't the reason she'd stopped. She hadn't even seen it until after hitting her brakes, and so the shrine could chalk up another miracle right now—Josephine's being alive. She'd stopped because an incredible rainbow radiance was shimmering in the gray sky behind the skeletons of the trees, as though a saint were materializing that moment in the sunken cow pasture off to the right, or men from outer space—who probably *were* the saints to begin with—were landing their saucer there.

The driver she'd almost rear-ended was cursing Josephine in his mirror. His kids were turned around in the back seat, making faces at her. She straightened her car and got in line, and inched along until she saw that the expanse below the road was not a cow pasture but a huge asphalt lot with hundreds of cars parked in it. The only miracle was the amount of electricity being used for the galaxy of colored lights strung along every tree limb and roof peak and window frame of the sprawling complex of buildings down there. A big canvas tent was set up along-

side the parking lot, next to acres of snow-covered lawns and a frozen duck pond with a promenade stretching into the middle of it. Then she saw the castle. It was up on the hill, the monastery where the brothers lived. It was bigger than some real castles she'd seen on TV, big enough for hundreds of people, and its storybook façade was encrusted, like everything else, with countless Christmas lights.

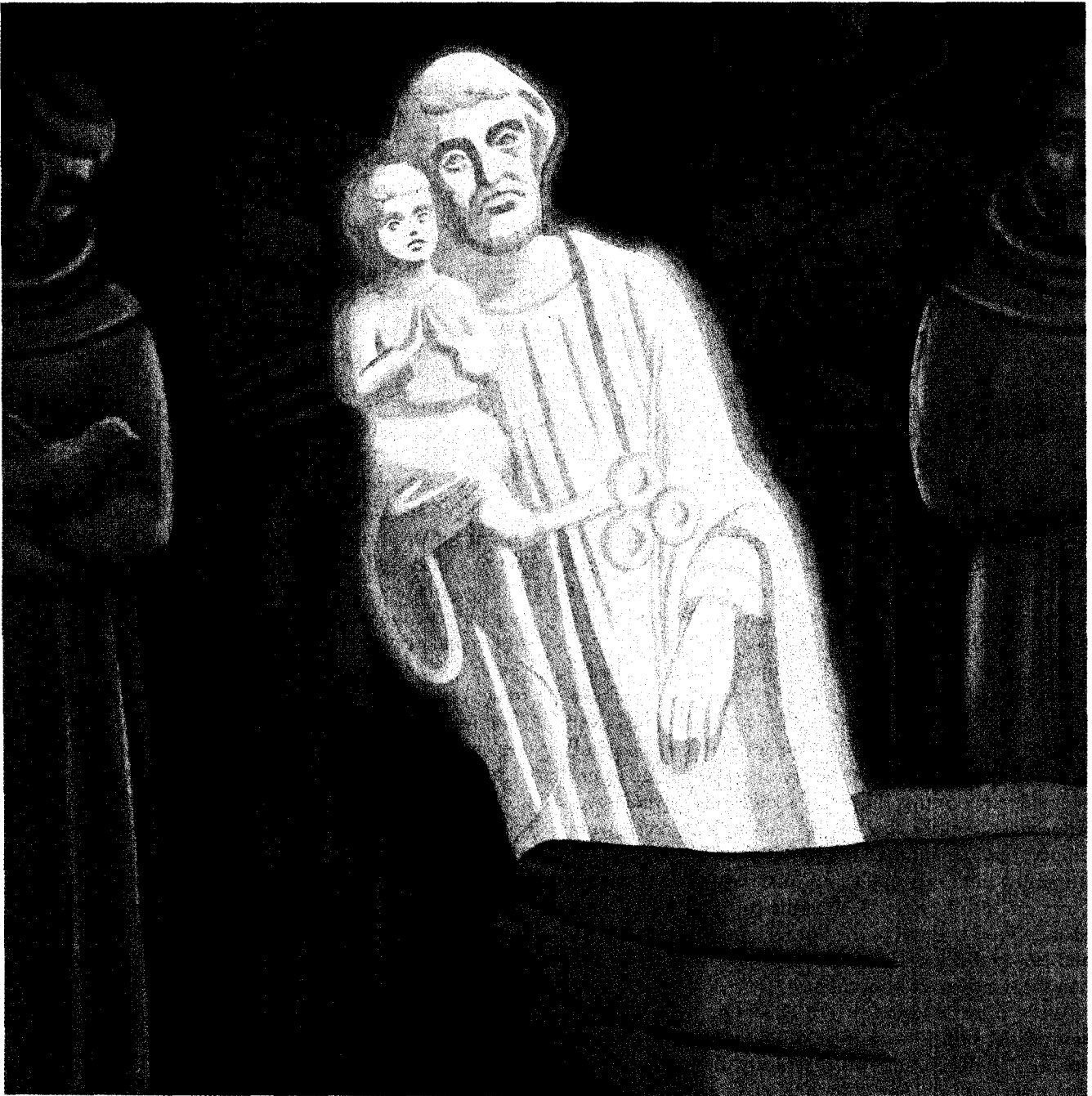
Josephine didn't see where they got off calling this a shrine. Jesus Land, maybe. God World. It upset her, but so did religion generally. She'd had plenty of priests and nuns in her life, especially nuns, and she could live just fine without the Church, which had no monopoly on God so far as she was concerned. She wouldn't have been going to a shrine at all except that her house had been on the market for more than a month and she hadn't had a nibble. Nobody had come back for a second look. Granted, it was a sad piece of property, a two-bedroom box with no character whatever, not even shutters—workmen had taken them off years before to install the ugly vinyl siding and had never put them back. The front yard was a joke, the back yard an only slightly larger joke. But people did buy and sell such things. Her real-estate agent,

Mary Jane, had assured her that someone would buy hers, too. A cardinal rule of real estate, Mary Jane had said, is that everything sells eventually.

Unfortunately, Mary Jane had grown disenchanted with Josephine, who was not cooperating with her. Josephine refused to put a FOR SALE sign on her front lawn, or to list her address in the paper so that people could drive by. The problem wasn't that she wouldn't do those things for Mary Jane; Josephine couldn't do them, or explain why she couldn't, so she simply refused. She couldn't do them because her son, Ricky, didn't know she was selling the house. She was selling it behind his back, and as soon as she'd sold it, she was going to run away to Florida.

She drove around the big lot three times looking for a space, and finally parked all the way over by the duck pond, at the base of the hill, the fairy-tale castle looming

*Josephine wanted to sell her house
and run away to Florida—but she thought
she might need help from Saint Joseph*



above her, spooky and fundamentally beyond belief. Yesterday, when she was crying on the phone about nobody buying her house, Camilla told her the old Saint Joseph trick. Camilla thought everybody knew about it; she'd assumed Josephine had done it already. When you want to sell a piece of real estate, you bury a statue of Saint Joseph in the lawn and he brings you a buyer. She ordered Josephine to go immediately to the famous shrine forty minutes south of Boston on I-95, where they had all kinds of saint figurines, and which was a beautiful sight to see at Christmastime anyway. Camilla said it was unholy that Josephine, raised Catholic even if she never went to mass anymore, had never been to the shrine in all

her years of living in the area, and this made Josephine smile, because Camilla had once told her—in the midst of Josephine's divorce—that the only unholy thing in life was bad matrimony.

CAMILLA KNEW THAT JOSEPHINE WAS RUNNING away. More than that, she approved completely. The idea was partly hers, in fact, and that was sad, because Camilla was the one person Josephine was really going to miss. The truth was, Josephine had always liked Camilla more than she had liked Camilla's son, Sal, her ex-husband, who took after

his father just the way Ricky took after Sal. Josephine had divorced Sal six years before, when Ricky was thirteen, and though most Italian mothers-in-law would have considered Josephine dead after that, the divorce brought Camilla and Josephine closer. The old lady knew her son was no good—she'd stopped crying over him long before Josephine did—and now, considering the way Ricky had turned out, Camilla had no use for her grandson, either.

The bad genes of men wove themselves through human generations like a corrosive thread, tainting the goodness of women. That was the thing you had to remember when you married a guy, Josephine thought. You were really marrying his father. And when you had a guy's son, you were having the guy.

Camilla, however, thought Florida was too far away and Josephine didn't know anybody there. But that was one of the things Josephine liked about it: she wouldn't know anybody. The other thing was something she'd read in a magazine—that Florida was at the cutting edge of things American, the first of the United States to enter the twenty-first century. Florida was already *in* the twenty-first century, the magazine article had said, and that sounded pretty incredible to Josephine. And besides, she was tired of being cold eight months of the year.

She was cold right now. The temperature was below freezing as she stepped out of her car into the aurora borealis of the Christmas lights. The vehicles looked like ornaments on a gigantic tree as she walked past them into the headache-inducing wind. A great many pickup trucks seemed to be visiting the shrine today, most of them with rifle racks in their rear cab windows. The racks were empty, but you got the idea, and if you didn't get it, the bumper stickers helped you out. To judge from the bumpers, the Eastern Seaboard's spiritual nodes were Disney World, South of the Border, and this very shrine, and things did not look good for people who wanted to ban the handgun or burn the flag.

Were other countries like this? Only the U.S.A.? Josephine didn't know. She'd never been to another country. Well, Florida was practically one, according to that magazine, and she'd be there soon, in the holy land of Mickey and Minnie. She felt slightly blue. She would have liked to take Ricky to Disney World when he was a kid, but she never had. She'd never had the money. Lately she spent a lot of time looking back on Ricky's youth, trying to figure out just where he turned bad, what might have prevented it, which things she might have broken her back to change. It was one of those mental games she was always playing, the kind that make you crazy.

She stumbled into the Information Center with her eyes full of tears from the wind. An automobile was parked in the lobby—a brand-new Ford Taurus, stickers still in the windows, sitting on the linoleum floor. Josephine glanced around at the various doorways, but she didn't see any way they could have gotten it in. A

young brother in a cassock sat at a table beside the car, with a stack of flyers and a gray metal box. He was raffling off the Ford to benefit the shrine.

"Excellent car," the brother said as Josephine picked up a flyer to read. "Automatic. Moon-roof. Cruise control."

"It's so strange that you're raffling a car," Josephine said. "I just almost had a terrible wreck in my own."

"Driver's-side air bag in this one," the brother said.

"I wasn't paying attention and I came around the bend, and I would've been killed except I saw all these lights and slammed on my brakes," Josephine said. "That's what saved me, all your Christmas lights. This shrine just saved my life."

The brother shook his head in wonderment.

"Of course," Josephine went on, "I was coming here in the first place, so you could also say this shrine almost just got me killed."

"That makes us even," the brother said.

Josephine examined the flyer describing the car. "What I really need is a convertible," she said. "I'm moving to Florida soon."

"Convertibles are death traps," the brother said. "You in particular shouldn't have one."

The tickets were a dollar fifty apiece, and the drawing didn't take place for four more months. Josephine hoped to be long gone by then. "How come you're raffling off a car now," she asked, "when you're not holding the drawing until April?"

"So we can sell a lot of tickets," the brother said.

"Oh," Josephine said. She hadn't expected him to be so forthright about it. He had a nice direct personality and a pleasant voice. He was pretty good-looking, too. "But you're lowering my chances of winning," she said.

"How much do you figure we're lowering them by?" the brother asked. He wasn't being sarcastic.

"Well, I figured you'd do the drawing in, you know, maybe a month."

"So we're cutting your chances by four. But if you bought four tickets, you'd be right back up there again."

"Oh, ho, what a salesman."

He pulled a stapled sheaf of tickets from his box. "We have booklets of five tickets for five dollars. You save two fifty, plus your chances go up to *better* than they'd have been if we held the raffle in a month." He smiled winningly. In civilian life this would definitely be flirting. "Did I mention the sound system?" he said. "AM, FM, auto-reverse cassette?"

Josephine was feeling lucky. If she actually won, she could always take a cheap one-way flight back from Florida to get it. Or a drive-away agency could have some college kid bring it down. Saint Joseph's hand would be strengthened, she thought, if she demonstrated a little faith and bought a book of tickets. She gave the brother the money and wrote her name and address on the coupon. "I'm looking for the gift shop," she said.

"Down below," he said, pointing at the floor.

Josephine laughed. "In the Other Place?"

The brother laughed too. "You wouldn't joke about that if you ate in the canteen down there."

She looked for a set of stairs.

"You have to go back out and around," he said. "Stupid design."

She followed the sidewalk into an underpass, where the wind wasn't blowing. The cold stopped hammering its fist on her skull. She was about to walk down the concrete steps when she saw that the complex of brick buildings wasn't the shrine at all. The real shrine was an esplanade enclosed by the mounds of two more suburban hills, a parklike place full of shrubs and statuary and garden beds that must have been something in the spring. Josephine loved parks and public gardens. Even covered with snow, the landscaping made her happy—the winding stone walls, marble stairs like pearl inlay in the hills, rhododendrons as large as trees. She stepped out of the underpass into the mouth of this place. Most of the visitors were here, it seemed, strolling around among statues that turned out to be Jesus at the Stations of the Cross. In their heavy winter clothes the worshippers were hard to match up with the trucks outside. On top of one hill towered a marble crucifix at least twenty feet tall. A wide staircase led up to this gigantic Jesus, with a sign that said THE HOLY STEPS.

An elderly man in a blue suit and tan raincoat was climbing The Holy Steps on his knees. The stairs were strangely shallow—each one just a baby step—and it took Josephine a minute to understand that they'd been designed for this purpose; even the aged gentleman could mount them while clasping his hands beneath his chin. At every step he stopped and crossed himself, and said another prayer. The Holy Steps numbered at least a hundred, and Josephine could now feel the cold through her fleece-lined boots.

THE GIFT SHOP HAD THE HOLY SMELL THAT MADE her feel ill, the smell church buildings always had, no matter where she went. Perhaps some essential oil, the Essence of Holiness, is distributed worldwide by Religious Supply, purveyors to the trade. Josephine didn't know, but she should, having grown up the way she did in a Catholic orphanage. Not that she'd been an orphan. That would have been too simple. That would have been normal, almost. No, Josephine had had two living parents and she was *still* raised in an orphanage—a Catholic home for young women, actually, which housed orphans, bad girls, and plain unfortunates such as herself. From the age of nine, when her parents split up, to the age of fifteen, she lived there because her father was a bum who didn't give her mother any money, and her poor mother, just a girl herself, couldn't make enough on her own to raise Josephine.

Inside the shop's door an alcove decorated with bales of hay was labeled STABLES and held a dozen mangers of various sizes, each containing a Mary, a Joseph, and a baby Jesus, along with three Wise Men and a farm animal or two. The big mangers were half life-size and beautifully done; they must have cost a fortune. Past the alcove, antiquity became the present as if a television channel had been switched. The store was big and modern, and full of pastel Post-it notes printed with chapter and verse, 3-D holograms of Jesus carrying the cross, religious desk blotters, religious penholders, religious paperweights, religious fluffy troll dolls in Day-Glo colors, religious picture frames filled with sample photos of happy families who existed only for marketing purposes.

Josephine grew more unsettled with every pious article she passed. She was starting to have an attack of her old religious asthma when she looked up and saw a sign that said SAINTS. A whole wall was devoted to the miracle workers, in alphabetical order beginning with Anthony. She walked along until she got to Joseph, recognizable partly because he came right before the popular Jude, but also because he was holding the baby Jesus, his son—or his stepson, or ward, or whatever their relationship was supposed to be, theologically. Josephine couldn't remember how it worked anymore. She glanced at the spot before Joseph, expecting to see Joan, but saw no Saint Joan. Only the men saints were there, no women, and no instructions on what to do with any of them, either. She'd expected lists of the powers each saint had, thinking that as long as she was here, she might get a few more to help her with other troubles.

In a corner of the store, racks of magazines bristled up the wall, heaps of sharp-looking periodicals with pictures of people playing guitars, going to flea markets, helping the poor in other countries. You could hardly tell they were religious magazines at all. They said nothing about sex being wrong, or about the guilt and shame you were supposed to feel about everything. Josephine's entire childhood seemed to have disappeared. But then, off at one edge of the rack, she spotted the pamphlets printed on cheap paper in loud, bleeding colors to match the things they were saying. This was the world she remembered. The pamphlets offered instructions on having the right kind of marriage, on raising your kids to be believers, on casting the Devil out of your home. One brochure was intended for a person thinking of becoming a monk—perhaps the very tract that had snared her friend upstairs.

She dug around a bit, and sure enough, she found a series on the powers of the saints. One saint was known as "The Heart Saint"; another was "The Cancer Saint." There was a saint you prayed to if you had arthritis, and a saint for mental illness. She expected but failed to find "Joseph, the Real Estate Saint." Physical maladies seemed to be the thing, so she flicked through every gaudy cover, hoping to see "The Dope Addict Saint" for

Ricky, or even "The Cigarette Saint" for herself—she'd buy that one—but they didn't have those, either.

On her way back to the figurines, she passed through the children's section. Religion was a sunnier thing for kids today than it had been for Josephine. She could see where kids would like these books and games and jigsaw puzzles. An old-fashioned children's book about the saints called *A Half Hour With God's Heroes* looked like something Josephine might herself have read back in Catholic school. She picked it up. It didn't contain the information she desired at this juncture in her fallen life—how to get a saint to bring people with money to your home. It was a storybook full of sweet little tales about the saints and the miracles they had performed, with ancient cartoon paintings to go along. It was great. Kind of great. She liked it. It was the kind of thing, she thought, that Camilla would like too, and she decided to buy it as a present for her.

She put it under her arm and went back to the statues. If you wanted a dinky little Saint Joe for forty-nine cents, they had that, but such a thing was not going into Josephine's lawn. On the other hand, she wasn't springing for the thirty-dollar hand-painted ceramic number, either. The plastic Saint Joseph for \$4.99 was a bland beeswax color, semi-translucent and perfectly hollow, but a good ten inches high and decently molded: you could make out the baby's features, whereas on the cheaper models the Savior's face was kind of a smudge. She balanced it in her hand and discovered that she was having difficulty breathing. Religious asthma, for real this time. She practically ran to the checkout, where, under the suspicious eyes of the lady at the computerized cash register, Josephine clawed money from her wallet like a Saint Joseph junkie scoring a fix.

SHE ASCENDED A DIFFERENT FLIGHT OF CONCRETE steps and found herself back at the Stations of the Cross, staring across a flagstone terrace at The Holy Steps. The old gentleman was almost to the top—all the way up on his knees. Dizzy, Josephine turned toward the parking lot, nearly knocking down a nun in a light-blue habit. The nun gave her the bad, scolding look of nuns everywhere, and Josephine was time-shifted back to the Catholic home, where a girl didn't simply live, she worked, and the nuns were her masters. Josephine had scrubbed the floors there a thousand times, and polished them once a month with Butcher's Wax from a can, buffing away the adhesive haze with a cloth-wrapped brick until her arm almost fell off. Yes, they would hit her hands with rulers if she didn't do it right; they really did that. She had worked outside for entire sweltering summer afternoons in her starched school uniform and dark knee socks, picking iridescent Japanese beetles off the roses and dropping them into coffee cans full of kerosene, where they died instantly, according to

the nuns, though Josephine had seen them suffer intensely with her own two eyes.

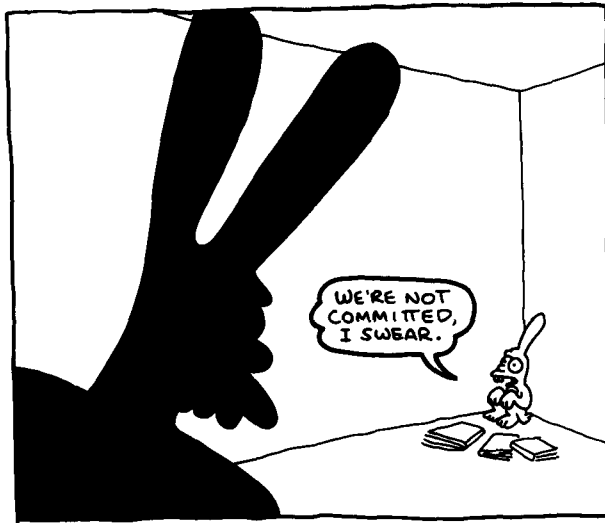
The sidewalk led right to the open mouth of the big canvas tent that she'd seen when she arrived. She walked up to it and peeked inside. A veritable sea of votive candles was burning in there—thousands of them, arranged in tiers, each flame in a green glass tube. You could light a candle here in the tent twenty-four hours a day. Josephine stepped inside, half expecting to choke, but a large hole in the tent top took the fumes away. Fifteen or twenty people were worshipping, one of them a bearded man in a shiny black parka and jogging pants, who was maintaining some kind of martial-arts stance before the candles, swinging his rosary like a whip and mumbling to himself. His approach to God was strangely hostile, but he was getting the same reception as anybody else. And that hit Josephine like a rock: God didn't care about a person's approach. The human things people cared so deeply about on Earth dropped through the screen when God scooped you up, panning for gold. Josephine wished they had taught this back in Catholic school. Her insight made her like God more than she could remember ever liking Him before. He was utterly indifferent to all the stuff she worried about. She felt free now to light a candle herself.

A sign said \$3 DONATION. Three dollars to light a candle! You got a shot at a new Ford for a dollar fifty. The new God she'd discovered wouldn't care whether she paid or not, but that was the difference between Him and His agents on Earth. His agents wanted the cash. She glanced around; nobody was looking, but she felt guilty anyway. She slipped three singles from her wallet into the Plexiglas box, and stepped onto the wooden platform.

Dear God, she prayed, lighting a candle, I wish I could say I believed in You a little more than I do. I used to, when I was a kid, and if You really exist, then I don't have to tell You. I don't believe in these candles, either, but I'm lighting this one for Ricky, my son. He's a junkie thief, as You presumably know. He's nineteen, but he won't get out of my life and go rob and torment someone else. Why did You let my son shoot dope and turn into a germ? He steals from me, his own mother, rips me off and lies to my face about it. Well, pretty soon he's going to wake up and find me gone. I'm here to get a Saint Joseph to sell my house, which is probably blasphemous or something, but You don't care about superficial things like that. I just got that point. So let me ask You this: Why does anybody bother talking to You at all? You know everything already. Why does anybody build a shrine like this? Why am I burying a Saint Joseph? Actions speak louder than words, right? And that's why candles cost three dollars? I get it.

She looked at Ricky's flame flickering in its green glass tube. It was a small, inconsequential thing to put up against the wall of crap her son lived behind. Once, before he stole her TV, she'd checked out the heavy-metal

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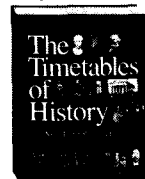
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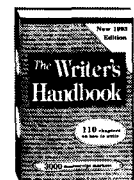
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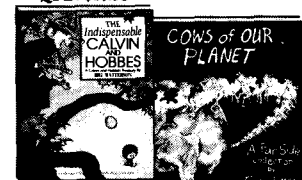
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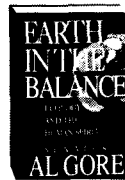
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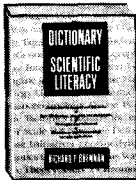
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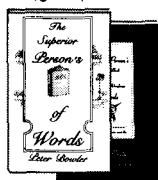
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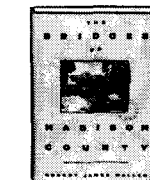
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videos he liked to watch when he was stoned and under her roof—the Satan-worshippers and leather Nazis acting nasty with guitars they couldn't even play. This was no turning of any generational wheel; it wasn't her own mother's dismay over the Rolling Stones. This was her offspring growing extra legs and wings and turning into a locust or something, and Josephine had decided that the leaders of the country secretly wanted youth this way, that it served some hidden government purpose. How else could she explain the incredible collection of losers she saw when she drove around town these days, every guy Ricky's age looking just like Ricky, a tattooed dooper who smashed bottles on the kids' playground every night and lived for nothing but whatever jolt he could get in the next fifteen minutes?

She'd hung on till he was nineteen, and that was it. Blood was thicker than water, but it wasn't thicker than a woman's whole life.

So I'm taking action, she continued to God. Maybe finding me gone will make him change. I doubt it, but if You could help him do that, that's all I ask. I'm not asking anything for myself. Well . . . I am asking to sell my house. And I wouldn't mind winning that car to have in Florida.

Mine's just about shot. Oh, and about Camilla. She's a great lady. Take care of her for me. Thank you, God.

She stepped down from the tiers of candles, away from the welter of wiggling flames. Hers flickered with the others, but when she blinked her eyes, she lost track of which one it was.

WHEN SHE GOT HOME, AN HOUR OF DAYLIGHT remained, possibly less. Today was her day off, and she was starting to wish she were going in. She hated the dark shroud that winter dropped over the afternoon. She was a chef at Cantami, in Boston, one of the new Italian places where everybody went. The restaurant's kitchen had no windows and a million small distractions, and you didn't have to experience the untimely demise of the day.

She half expected to find Ricky in the house, or some evidence he'd been around—something missing or messed up somehow—but she didn't see anything. She'd thrown him out a year ago, when he turned eighteen. She would have liked to bounce him sooner, but he'd been remanded to her custody at sixteen, after sticking up a

WHEN THE YOUNG HUSBAND . . .

When the young husband picked up his friend's pretty wife
in the taxi one block from her townhouse for their
first lunch together, in a hotel dining room
with a room key in his pocket,

midtown traffic gridlocked and was abruptly still.
For one moment before Klaxons started honking,
a prophetic voice spoke in his mind's ear despite
his pulse's erotic thudding:

"The misery you undertake this afternoon
will accompany you to the ends of your lives.
She knew what she did, when she agreed to this lunch,
although she will not admit it;

and you've constructed your playlet a thousand times:
cocktails, an omelet, wine; the revelation
of a room key; the elevator rising as
the penis elevates; the skin

flushed, the door fumbled at, the handbag dropped; the first
kiss with open mouths, nakedness, swoon, thrust-and-catch;
endorphins followed by endearments; a brief nap;
another fit; restoration

of clothes, arrangements for another encounter,
the taxi back, and the furtive kiss of good-bye.
Then, by turn: tears, treachery, anger, betrayal;
marriages and houses destroyed;

small children abandoned and inconsolable,
their foursquare estates disestablished forever;
the unreadable advocates; the wretchedness
of passion outworn; anguished nights

sleepless in a bare room; whiskey, meth, cocaine; new
love, essayed in loneliness with miserable
strangers, that comforts nothing but skin; hours with sons
and daughters studious always

to maintain distrust; the daily desire to die
and the daily agony of the requirement
to survive, until only the quarrel endures."
Prophecy stopped; traffic started.

—Donald Hall

convenience store. Josephine had wanted him sent to reform school then, but the lawyer assured her that institutionalization only made kids like Ricky worse, and then they came home like mutant bacteria that nothing could kill. By this logic Josephine was left alone with a full-fledged juvenile delinquent. A father's guiding hand would have been nice, but no court in the world would have let her ex-husband care for Ricky or any other kid, so it didn't really matter that Sal was halfway through six-to-eight for armed robbery—short time for that offense, because he wasn't the one carrying the gun. Or so the judge had been persuaded to believe. Josephine didn't even know. She knew that Sal *had* a gun: she'd seen it a number of times—once pointed at her head, which was why she got her divorce.

When she threw Ricky out, he went to live with his girlfriend, and Josephine changed the locks on the house. But Ricky knew how to pick locks, and came in whenever he pleased. Sometimes he wanted to spend the night. Sometimes he just wanted to steal something. Josephine couldn't keep him out, so she asked him not to come in when she wasn't around. He came the next day and stole her toaster oven. He called that "borrowing." By now Ricky had borrowed almost every fenceable thing Josephine owned—her TV and VCR, her stereo, her clock radio, two toaster ovens, a nice floor lamp—along with whole cartons of cigarettes, and cash if she was stupid enough to leave any around. The television set had become his symbolic object, even though Josephine liked to eat toast almost as much as she liked to watch TV. Every time he came around, he promised to bring the television back. If it weren't so pathetic, it might have been endearing, this insistence that he had the TV and would return it next time, when Josephine knew perfectly well he'd shot it into his crotch the same day he stole it. That was where Ricky and his friends stuck the dope, in the hairy parts of their groins, so they wouldn't have marks the cops could find easily.

She made a mug of strong black coffee, and got her garden spade from the basement. She put on her parka and cap and gloves, and stuck Saint Joseph in one of her cargo pockets. Thus outfitted, she looked out the kitchen window into her tiny back yard. Something was terribly wrong out there. Everything beyond her property line was gone. The world had broken off like a cardboard picture and fallen away. Her snow-filled birdbath was still there in the foreground, along with her revolving clothesline like some weird antenna on its aluminum mast. After that the sky was empty and gray. A spasm of terror sealed Josephine's windpipe. Even in her panic, unable to breathe, she blamed herself: God was punishing her after all for burying Joseph, slicing the world right off at her door.

When she blinked her eyes into focus, everything was normal again. Yes, she'd been raised by the nuns—when in doubt, assume holy wrath. The cold, cloudy sky was al-

most the same shimmering gray as her neighbor's weathered fence, and the two things—gray sky, gray cedar boards—had feathered together in a visual trick, making her yard look like the edge of the earth. She almost laughed, but she couldn't quite do it. A vision of doomsday shakes a person up, even when it's an optical illusion. She got the Old Grand-Dad from the cupboard and glugged some into her coffee, had a slurp, and headed out into what had just been, for a second, the end of the world.

Saint Joseph belonged dead center in the lawn, she decided, sipping her fortified coffee and setting it down in the snow. The ground felt hard. She dropped the point of her spade; the lawn was like rock. She kicked off the snow and took a purposeful whack, and got maybe a sixteenth of an inch in. She wanted to cry. Then she reflected that the ground would be most frozen near the surface, and softer the deeper she went. Three or four inches down it might not be frozen at all. She had to be the most naturally optimistic person she'd ever met.

She thought about the shrine as she dug. She hadn't said a prayer in years, and now she remembered why. Praying was absurd. If God existed, He knew your every thought. He could only laugh when you tried to single out certain ones for His special attention. If God existed, every single thing you thought would be a prayer. Everything you *did* would be a prayer. Your *whole life* would be a prayer, Josephine thought, and when she thought that, burying Saint Joseph suddenly made more sense. She was being superstitious, but at least that called for action—throwing salt over your shoulder, carrying a rabbit's foot, wearing specific socks when you played gin rummy. Superstitious people were the most religious of all, Josephine decided, because they lived their beliefs. Their weird obsessions were their ongoing prayer. That made gamblers like her ex-husband the priests and rabbis of the group. Their whole lives were offerings to luck—and what was luck if not fate, and what was fate if not God? Sal was a hood, but he was a spiritual hood—Josephine saw this about him for the very first time. And there he was now in his monastery cell, like the young brother she'd met today. The young brother selling raffle tickets.

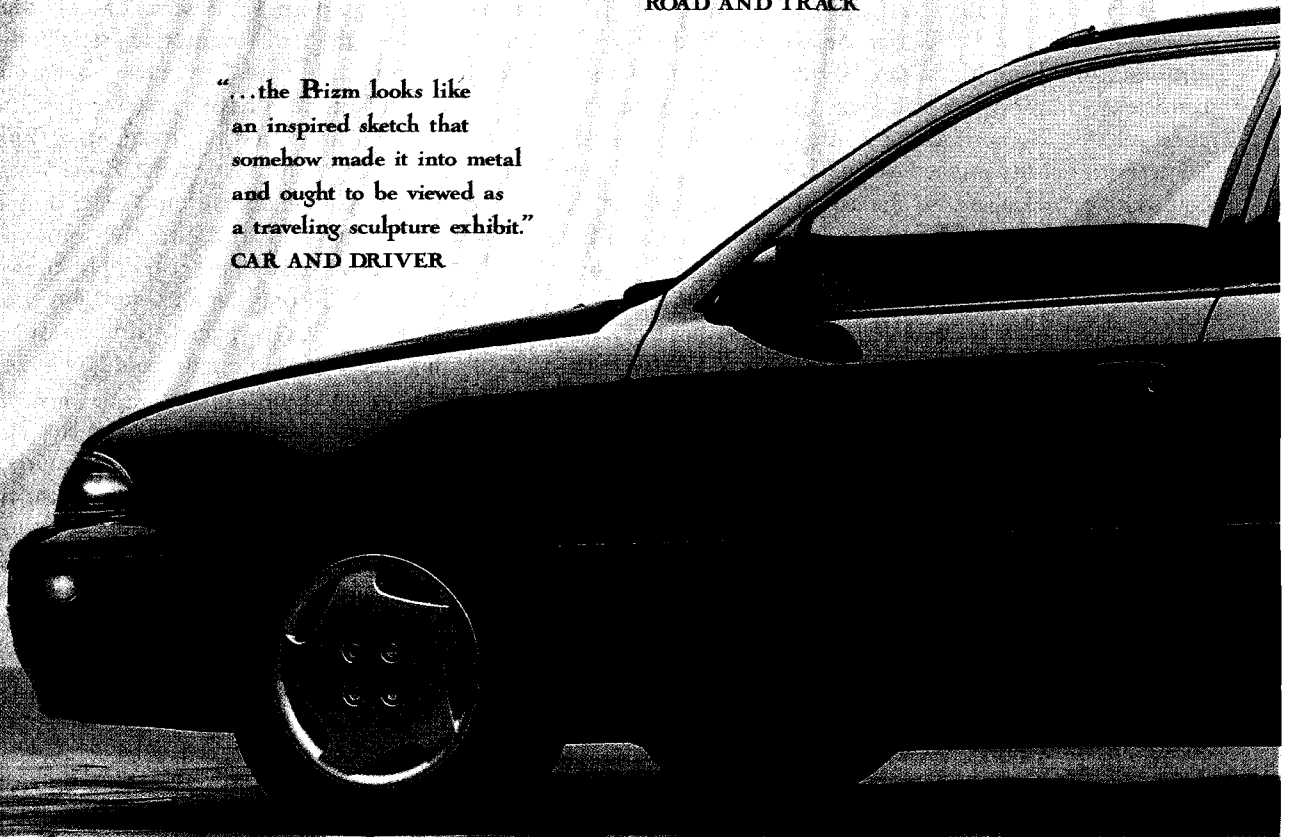
She hooted at the sky and sipped her drink. The drink was cold now, but that was what she needed, whereas before she'd needed something hot. Everything taking care of itself. The statue's resting place looked pretty good. All she really had to do was get him deep enough so the dogs didn't dig him up before the sale. After her exertions over his tomb, the hollow Saint Joseph seemed to weigh nothing in her hand. He seemed to float in space before her eyes. She set him down on his back in the hole, but found that she couldn't shovel the dirt on top of him, not right on his face like that. She turned him face-down, but that seemed worse. When she picked him up again, half-frozen dirt had sifted into his open base. You

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could see it through the translucent cream-colored skin: Saint Joseph turning brown as he filled up with soil.

She washed him in the kitchen sink and put him in a Ziploc freezer bag, and when she got back outside, she told herself she'd done her best, plopped Joseph in his hole without looking, and scraped soil over him till he disappeared. She tamped down the remaining earth and threw a few spadefuls of snow on the spot. Then she looked around to see if anyone had been watching. She felt furtive and guilty, not uplifted by the magical presence of a sacred personage on her side. She needed to perform some better ritual, something to improve the efficacy of this whole bad act. She closed her eyes to conjure up an image of her soul at peace, and one came to her—her soul in a hot bubble bath with some more Old Grand-Dad.

SHE POACHED HERSELF IN THE TUB AND THOUGHT about food. Her struggle with the earth had left her ravenous, and helped her appreciate the hunger that Sal used to have back when they first got married. He was working as a stonemason then, and came home at night ferocious for the pastas and cheeses and spicy meats his mama had stuffed him with his whole life till then. Josephine, a girl from a tuna-casserole family, prepared meals that Sal didn't even consider food. And so, nineteen years ago, Camilla had come over to teach Italian cooking to her son's twenty-year-old bride.

The phone rang out in the kitchen. Josephine slid her ears into the water to make it go away. She had old Camilla to thank for a lot of things—her career as a chef, her changing real-estate luck, even her dinner tonight, which she'd brought home from Cantami yesterday because she knew she wouldn't want to cook today. Lying back in the tub like a dragoness, bourbon fumes escaping her nostrils, she relished the food awaiting her—linguini with calamari sauce, one of her favorite things in the world. Camilla had taught her to make it. In honor of Camilla, Josephine was going to find someplace great to cook in Florida, some incredibly classy restaurant where she'd knock their eyes out and get articles written about herself in the paper. She'd send those articles to Camilla, and Camilla would come to visit her. They'd wade together in the blue Atlantic Ocean.

She appeared in her kitchen in her terrycloth robe, feeling immensely better. The phone machine wasn't blinking—her caller hadn't left a message. That meant Camilla had called; she wouldn't talk to "jukeboxes," as she called telephone answering machines. Dinner resided in two takeout containers in the fridge: from one she plopped cold linguini onto a plate; from the other she poured the nice-looking red sauce with its rings and tentacles of squid. She covered it all with plastic wrap and put it on the microwave carousel. She'd been against zap-

pers at first, but they were surprisingly all right for pasta dishes. Her carpenter had built the microwave into a cabinet on the wall for her, or it wouldn't have been here right now at all.

Then she flipped on the backyard floodlight and stood at the sink window with a glass of Chianti, fantasizing about the real-estate calls that might come in as early as tomorrow. It was night now and frigidly cold, even to the eye. She thanked the Lord for alcohol. Sharp gusts of wind blew powdery snow into the air, where it sifted like silver-blue glitter through the plastic rigging of her revolving clothesline. Saint Joseph, earthly father of the Christmas manger, was out there under the earth, irradiating her property with saintliness.

She got the cordless phone and pushed Camilla's speed button. The microwave started beeping the instant the number rang. The bells in Josephine's life always went off all at once. She popped the oven door and lifted a corner of the plastic wrap, averting her face from the steam.

"Hi, Ma," she said when Camilla answered. "It'sa me."

"It'sa you, bad girl," Camilla said.

"I'ma no bad girl," Josephine said. They always played this game. She clamped the phone between ear and shoulder so she could grab her wine, and walked herself and her comforts into the dining room. "Hey, Ma, you calla me?"

"I no calla you."

The food was too hot to eat, but she shoved in a forkful anyway. "Oh. Okay," Josephine mumbled around the pasta, huffing puffs of steam to save her mouth. "Guess what?"

"No eat when you talk!" Camilla said.

"Sorry. I'm starving."

"What you eat over there?"

Josephine was burning her tongue with a hot calamari tentacle, and it took her a few seconds to get the answer out.

"You get fresh squid?" Camilla asked.

"Nice and fresh, Ma. From the restaurant."

"Why you so hungry? You no hava lunch?"

"I'm hungry from burying Saint Joseph. The ground is like a rock."

"You get nice saint?"

"Got a nice big one. About a foot long. Real nice."

"Hold baby Jesus?"

"Of course, Ma. That's how you know it's Joseph. 'Cause he has Jesus."

"You bury like I tella you?"

"What do you mean, like you tella me? I buried him. He's in the ground. I put him in a plastic bag so he wouldn't get dirty."

"I tella you, head going down."

"No, Ma. You did not tella me that. What? Straight down?"

"Straight down!"



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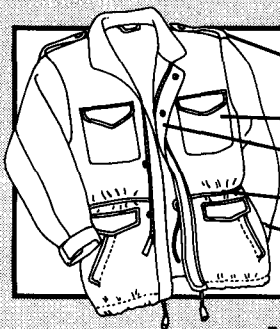
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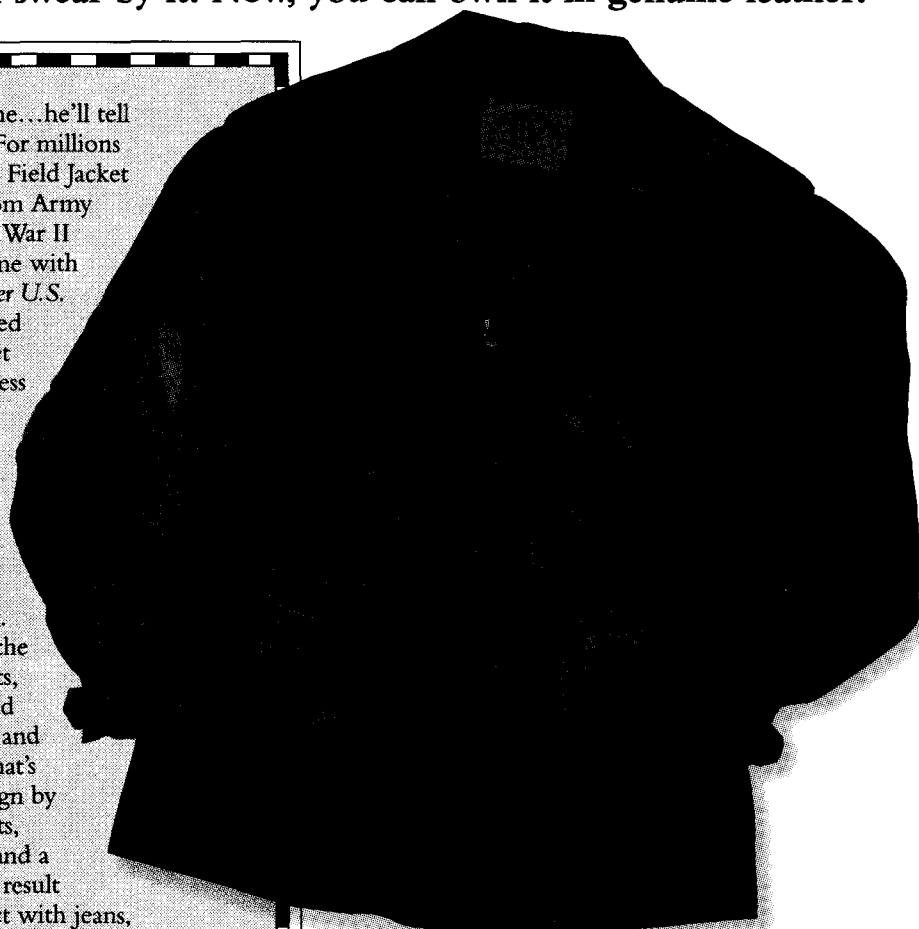


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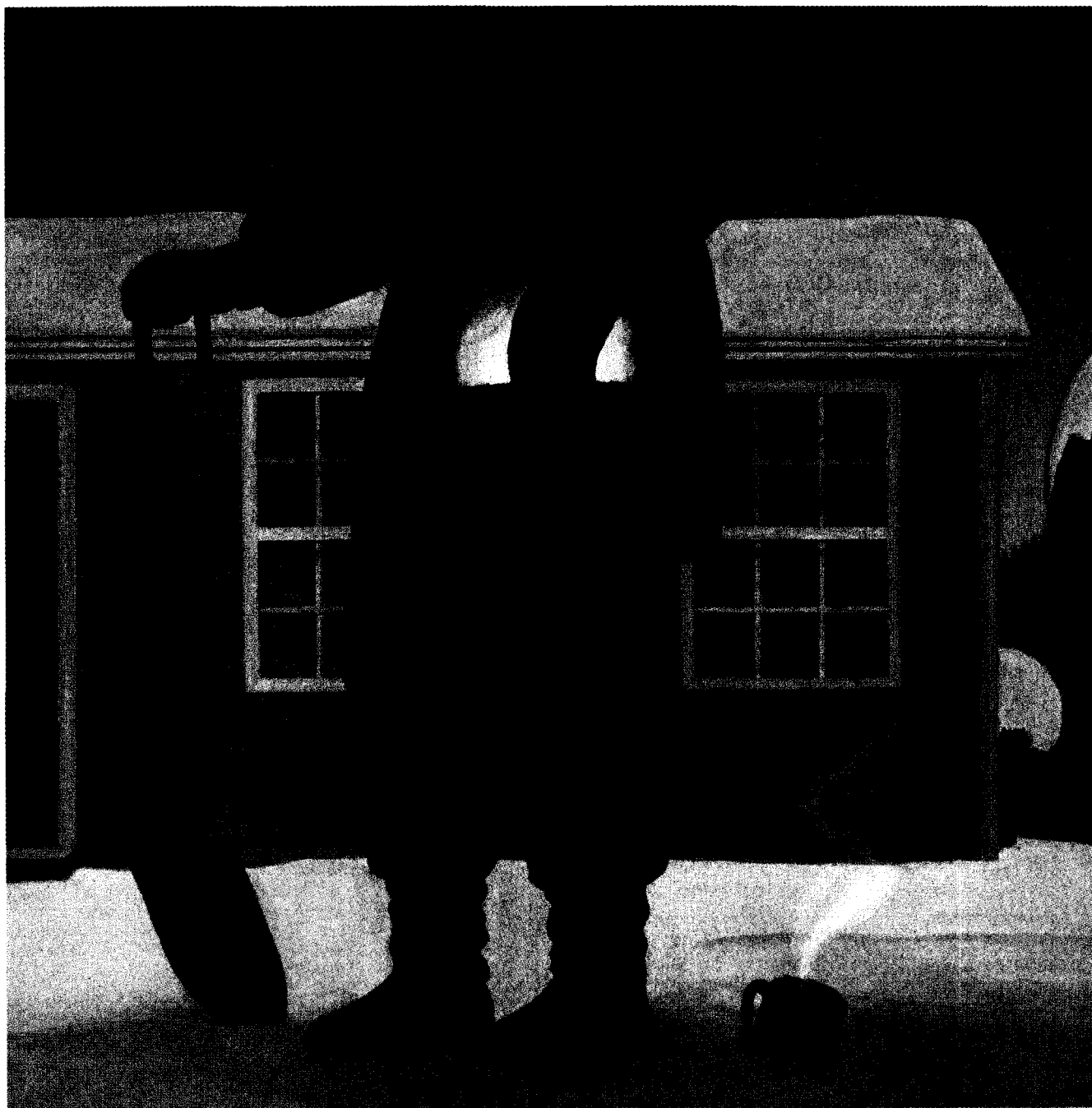
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"Ma, I buried him good, in a nice plastic bag in the back yard."

"Back yard! No back yard! Front yard!"

"You did not tell me front yard."

"I tella you!"

"Ma, I live on a busy street. People will see me."

"How you gonna sella you house?"

Josephine tossed her fork onto her plate and stood up from the table. "Are you really telling me this isn't gonna work?"

"I tella you, Josephine!"

"You did not tella me, Ma!"

"I tella you!"

SHE BURST OUT THE BACK DOOR OF THE HOUSE in her jeans and boots and goose-down parka, cursing Chianti vapors at the arctic darkness beyond the range of her floodlight. She had her spade in one hand, her wineglass in the other. The wind had blown the snow into drifts across the yard, and now she couldn't find the spot where she'd buried the saint. She stamped around, kicking at the snow. Chianti sloshed out of the glass, staining her sleeve. She drank some more, and then ran the shovel around like a locomotive till she found the soft spot she'd made before. She forced herself to go gingerly from there, so as not to disembowel the saint with her spade.

It was too much to ask that she be left alone. Mr. Crocus, her neighbor on the side with only a naked privet hedge, came out into his own postage stamp of a back yard to walk his hateful yippy dog, Felicia. Josephine very much doubted that Felicia had to go. She almost never saw Mr. Crocus walk the dog in winter; she was sure he let the little rodent relieve itself in the basement and saved its business in mayonnaise jars until spring. No, her nosy neighbor had seen her outside with a shovel, cursing and stomping, and he had to know what she was doing. Josephine pretended not to see him, and went on with the exhumation.

"Josephine!" he called out over the hedge. "What are you digging there?"

She looked up and feigned surprise. "Oh, Mister Crocus!" she said. "What am I digging? A begonia. An exotic begonia tuber I bought by mail order. I decided it belonged in the front yard after all, and I couldn't sleep till I moved it." With unmistakable finality, she added, "Good night, Mister Crocus."

"You don't plant begonias this time of year," he said.

"These you do," she replied, scraping the soil. "They're perennials."

Saint Joe's plastic shroud glistened in the dirt. Josephine grabbed it and extirpated him like a root. This brought Felicia past the point of self-containment. She howled ghoulishly and tried to tear through the bare hedge while Mr. Crocus yelled and slapped her with her leash's leather handle.

"But you have it in a plastic bag," he protested.

"That's how you do this kind of root. You trick it into thinking it's winter."

"But it is winter."

"Yes, Mister Crocus. *Here*. But not where the root comes from."

She put the saint in her cargo pocket, fetched her glass from the snow, and raised it in a toast. "To your health, Mister Crocus! To Felicia!" She tossed off a swig and wiggled her fingers good-bye.

"Can I see this root, Josephine?" he called out. "I'd like to see this root."

"Gotta get it in the ground," she called back, hurrying up the narrow driveway on the opposite side of the house. Her fury at her neighbor made the digging easier this time—or maybe the front yard got more sun and didn't freeze so hard. She was working beyond the small well of light from her front-porch fixture, and couldn't see into the hole, but when it felt deep enough, she pulled Saint Joseph from her parka pocket and stuck him in, head-down—no, she was still several inches shy. She could have bought the forty-nine-cent Joseph and buried him with a teaspoon, but she had to be grandiose. Did the spirits care about the size of your saint? She tossed him onto the snow, and chopped like a madwoman at the base of the hole. Even in fleece-lined gloves her hands were going numb.

Felicia began barking on the second floor next door.

Josephine looked up to see the dog's master peeping through the window curtains. *Croak off, Mister Crocus!* she barked at him in her mind. Given her exhaustion, the cold, and the Chianti, she couldn't be sure she hadn't yelled it out loud. She must have, because suddenly her neighbor's window went dark. Or actually, no, the whole side of his white house lit up. Josephine thought she must have burst a vessel in her brain, or for some other reason was hallucinating. Then she saw that her arms were lit up too, and throwing shadows across the blue-white lawn; the lawn itself was lit up, the shovel, Saint Joseph in his Ziploc bag on the snow. She twisted around to look. Her mental curse at Mr. Crocus had blocked the sound of a truck pulling into her drive and stopping halfway, as though about to turn around. She was kneeling before a hole in her lawn at eight o'clock on a frigid night, caught like an animal in someone's lights. She thought of the rifle racks she'd seen at the shrine.

She waited for the truck to back out and go away. Instead, its lights snapped off, though its rear end was still technically out in the street. It wasn't a truck. It was the smashed-up van of Ricky's jackass of a friend Alfie, whom she could see, in the glare of the streetlight, sitting behind the wheel. Her son was in the passenger seat. They stared at her through the windshield in the relative dark. Then they pushed open the creaking doors and stumbled out of the van.

Had it been summer, you could have seen their tattoos. As it was, they wore scuffed black leather and deformed ski caps. The spectacle of Josephine digging a hole in the lawn seemed to focus their wobbling attention, straighten them out momentarily, though they were clearly on goofballs of some kind. They moved in slo-mo, like androids whose joint grease was thickened by the cold. Josephine plunged Saint Joseph into the ground head-first and pulled dirt over him with her gloves. Then she stood and shoveled in the rest, and tramped it down with her boots. The representatives of drugged youth arrived as she finished. Ricky just stood looking at the dirty place in the snow. Alfie was the first to speak.

"Hi, Missus Vitale," he said, looking her up and down without even pretending he wasn't. "Whatcha doin'?"

"I'm not *Missus Vitale*. There's no such person. You can call me Miz Sessions. *Miz Sessions*."

"Excuse me, *Miz Sessions*," the sarcastic bastard said.

"Whatcha doin', Mom?" Ricky said.

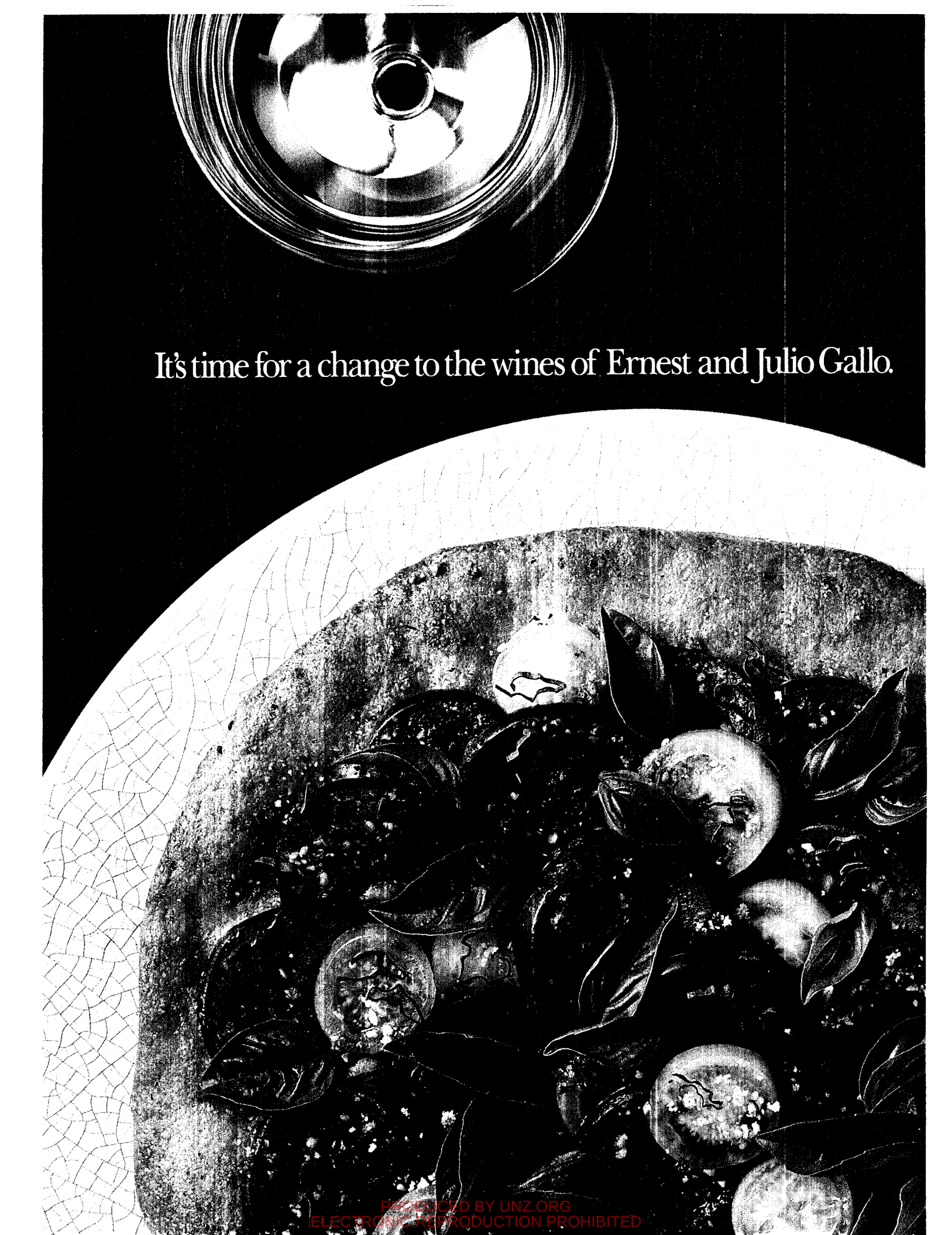
She answered, "You're not supposed to come here when I'm not around."

This point seemed to dumbfound Josephine's son. He licked his lips and blinked his eyes. "But you are around."

"I know I'm around. You're supposed to call first."

"I did call."

"Oh, that was you. Well, you didn't get any answer, right? That means I'm not around." She gestured at the van. "You got my TV?"

A high-contrast, black and white photograph. The top half shows a close-up of a car's alloy wheel, with the spokes and tire visible. The bottom half shows a white plate with a textured, cracked surface, containing a dark, textured food item, possibly a pizza or a large sandwich, topped with various ingredients including what looks like mushrooms, herbs, and possibly meat or cheese. The lighting is dramatic, creating strong highlights and deep shadows.

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Ricky looked at the van. "I forgot it. What are you buryin'?"

"None of your business."

"That's not very nice," Alfie said. "My mom doesn't talk to me that way."

"You don't even know where your mom is, schmuck," Ricky said. "Shut up." He turned to Josephine with a smile. "You buryin' the money and jewels?"

"Yeah, right, Ricky."

Josephine felt someone looking and glanced up at the window next door. When she did, Ricky grabbed the shovel from her hand. With one swipe of its blade he unearthed the plastic freezer bag. He pulled on its edge and plucked Saint Joseph from the ground.

"Hey, it's a religious thing," Alfie said.

"Give him a medal," Josephine said.

Ricky held the saint up in the yellow light from the front porch. He peered into its hollow bottom and shook it, but nothing came out. He poked at the hole in the ground with the spade.

"There's nothing else," Josephine said. "Just Saint Joseph."

"Is that who this is?"

"Can't you see he's holding the baby Jesus?"

"Oh, yeah. So what are you buryin' him for?"

"It's an old good-luck tradition. You bury a Saint Joseph for Christmas. I'm doing Christmas traditions this year."

"You bury him and he brings you good luck?"

"That's right."

"Huh," Alfie said.

"You gettin' religious?" Ricky asked.

"I've always been religious," Josephine said. "But now I'm born again."

"*You* are? Born again?"

"That's right. So give me my saint and take off, okay?"

"I need to talk to you about something."

"I don't have anything, Ricky. It's gone. You took it all."

"He might, like, have some news to tell you," Alfie said.

"Will you stay the hell out of my life?" Josephine said to Alfie. She turned to her son. "You wanna talk, you can talk. Inside. Alone."

"Go wait in the van," Ricky said to his friend.

"Hey, it's, like, really fuckin' cold out here," Alfie said.

"Don't you know you're not supposed to talk that way in front of me?" Josephine said. "Go turn on the heat in your stupid van."

"The heat doesn't work."

"Then freeze."

Josephine picked up her wineglass, pulled Saint Joseph from Ricky's hand, and climbed the front-porch steps. Ricky followed her.

"Hey, I might not be here when you come out, Rick," Alfie said.

"Then he'll stay here tonight," Josephine said.

"I have to go somewhere with him," Ricky said.

"Then go."

"I gotta talk to you, Mom."

"Then talk."

Ricky turned on the steps to face Alfie. "Just wait for me, okay, idiot?"

JOSEPHINE WISHED SHE HADN'T LEFT HER Chianti bottle on the kitchen counter, but she had, and now Ricky made a point of smirking at it while she took off her parka. In his simplemindedness, her having a drink leveled the moral playing field between them. If she now tried to pretend she hadn't been drinking, the field would tilt in his favor. So she uncorked the bottle and poured herself another glass, even though she didn't want one. She threw Saint Joseph on the counter and lit a cigarette, too. Never apologize, never explain. It worked for Ricky. It seemed to be working for her, too. He had nothing to say. He took off his cap but not his leather jacket. His hair was cut in the goofy homeboy mode, the temples shaved away.

"I guess I don't get offered a drink," he said.

"You're gonna mix booze and those goofballs you're on?" Josephine said. "You're not bad enough as it is? You want to be a vegetable now?"

"I ain't on any goofballs," Ricky said.

"Who do you think's gonna take care of you when you're a giant slug? Me? Don't count on it, pal."

"I didn't even want a drink," Ricky said. He opened the fridge. "Is there anything from the restaurant around? I'm pretty hungry."

"I ate most of what there was. Today's my day off. That's why I'm here, right? You didn't expect me to be here. You came 'cause you thought I wasn't around."

"I told you. I came to talk to you."

"You can have peanut butter and jelly and a glass of milk."

"That's okay with me. I'll take that."

"Take it. You know where it is."

She took the wine bottle to the dining-room table while he rattled around in the kitchen. She stubbed out her cigarette and lit another one. She was going to quit smoking when she got to Florida. People would see her jogging by the ocean in fluorescent shorts. In time her lungs would turn pink, as though she'd never lived this dirty life. Time would go backward. She'd be young again. She'd pass Ricky on her way back, looking like Methuselah under his wicked dope.

He came out with a white-bread sandwich and a glass of milk. He'd had countless identical meals at this very table as a boy, and it was mockery—the props remaining exactly the same though the plot had changed so utterly. There should be a different kind of bread to make sandwiches from when your heart was broken, Josephine

Immigration Fuels U.S. Population Growth

We at Negative Population Growth, Inc. (NPG) believe that our country is already vastly overpopulated in terms of the long range carrying capacity of its resources and environment.

We believe, therefore, that U.S. population growth should be halted as soon as possible, and eventually reversed.

But, unless our present massive immigration is drastically reduced, we will never be able to stabilize our population at a sustainable level.

In the decade of the 80s we grew by some 25 million. Immigration, both legal and illegal, accounted for about 40 percent of that huge increase in our numbers. Projections are that we will grow by at least as much in the 90s.

If present rates of fertility and immigration continue, our population, now over 256 million, will pass 400 million shortly after 2050, with no end to growth in sight! Such growth would be catastrophic both for our environment, and for our standard of living.

We need to reduce immigration to the level of emigration (out-migration) so that immigration will no longer contribute to our population growth. That would require halting **illegal** immigration, and reducing **legal** immigration to a comprehensive ceiling of 200,000 a year, including all relatives and refugees. Then, immigration would be roughly balanced with emigration.

We now allow roughly 700,000 legal immigrants to come here each year. Their numbers are swelled by perhaps 300,000 **illegal** immigrants.

Advocates of Massive Immigration Are Wrong!

There are powerful forces that fight tooth and nail not only to keep immigration at the present high level, but to increase it. Among them are employers who want low-wage labor, ethnic groups whose leaders seek greater political power, and humanitarians who believe in virtually open borders.

They also include pro-growth advocates who believe that an ever-growing labor force, fueled by immigration, is necessary to achieve their goal of an ever-increasing GNP. That goal, in the real world of environmental and resource limits, is a recipe for disaster.

How Can We Best Help Others?

Beyond any question, the United States must maintain the humane policies toward immigrants and refugees that have characterized its past.

But we need to express our compassion in an intelligent way. Our guiding principle should be to do the most good for the greatest number. Our priority should be to improve living conditions in the developing countries, rather than to allow vast numbers of their citizens to settle here.

World population is growing by some 90 million a year, and almost all of that growth occurs in the developing countries. We cannot possibly allow more than a tiny fraction of those millions to come here. What can we do to help all those who have no choice but to remain at home?

One thing is crystal clear. The problems of the underdeveloped countries are beyond solution by emigration. To pretend otherwise is simply self-delusion.

Nothing can permanently improve living conditions in these countries unless they first halt their population growth, the root cause of their poverty and environmental degradation.

Those who assert that eradicating poverty is a prerequisite for halting population growth have the process just backwards. Only after halting their population growth can developing countries even begin to bring their standard of living up to an adequate level.

If we are genuinely concerned with their welfare, we should spare no effort or expense to help those nations that are prepared to make a determined effort to halt, and eventually to reverse, their population growth.

We Need A Sensible U.S. Immigration Policy

We cannot continue to allow our national immigration policy to be dictated by special interest groups who pursue their own agendas without regard for the broad national interest.

Our immigration policy should be an integral part of a national population policy aimed at halting, and then reversing, our population growth, so that U.S. population can eventually be stabilized at a lower, more sustainable level.

As Americans, our first obligation, to ourselves and to our children and grandchildren, is to restore and preserve the land we have inherited. In shaping our immigration policy, our top priority must be our own national interest, and the welfare of present and future generations of Americans.

If you agree that we need to drastically reduce legal immigration, and halt illegal immigration once and for all, we need your support. NPG is a nonprofit, public interest organization founded in 1972. To become a member, please send us your check today.

YES! I want to become a member of NPG, and help reduce U.S. immigration to a level compatible with our national interest. I am enclosing my check for annual membership dues.

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AT-3

thought. Milk should come in different colors, so you could tell at a glance which part of your life you were in. "What's on your mind?" she said.

Ricky was flipping through *A Half Hour With God's Heroes* with one hand, eating his sandwich with the other, looking at the book and then at his mother, and shaking his head. He closed it and pushed it away. "Well," he said, and clacked the table with his long, dirty nails. "I guess I'm gonna be a father."

Josephine had been taking a drag on her cigarette, and she choked on the smoke. "*What!* Don't be ridiculous. You're not becoming any father."

"It's not ridiculous. She just told me today."

Josephine stood up so fast her chair fell down. She pointed at Ricky with her cigarette. "Then she's not very pregnant. She can get an abortion right now."

"She says she's not. She says she's having it."

Josephine righted her chair. A finger of wine remained in her glass, which she took to the kitchen and threw down the drain. "I'm having a cup of tea," she said. "You want one?"

"No."

"You want anything else?"

"I gotta go in a minute."

She put water on to boil. "Where do you have to go?"

"To Charlene's."

"What are you going to tell her?"

"Nothing, Mom. I told her everything already."

"Like what?"

"Like she shouldn't have the kid."

"That's right! It's a sin for her to have this kid! A sin! You're a drug addict! She works in a lousy diner! This kid is gonna have no life! Zero!"

"I'm not a drug addict," Ricky said.

"You're stoned right now!"

"I'm not a drug addict."

"When did you stop?"

"A while ago."

"You're lying. You know who you sound like? Your father. You lie exactly like your father."

"If you hate my father so much, how come you married him? You weren't knocked up with me. You didn't have to marry him."

He always did this when they got to this point. Maybe she should have been grateful he still followed the old script. Maybe that meant he had human feelings left, and wasn't just a lab animal sucking a nozzle. Maybe he was sorry his life had gone this way. "I've told you why. I fell in love with him. I didn't know who he really was."

"He probably didn't either," Ricky said.

This stopped Josephine. It was the most thoughtful thing she'd ever heard Ricky say. "Are you gonna live up to your responsibilities and support this kid?" she said.

"Yup."

"How?"

"I'm gonna work."

"You've never worked in your life! And what about Charlene?"

"She's gonna work too."

"You're both gonna work. So who's gonna take care of the baby? Me? Is that what you think? Is that why you're in such a hurry to tell me?"

"Well, a lot of mothers would do their share," Ricky said.

"Their share! Are you kidding me?" She was screaming above the screeching teakettle. She went out to the kitchen to turn it off.

Ricky hiked up in his chair to look through the gauzy curtains on the living room's picture window. "I gotta go. He's freezing out there."

Josephine came into the dining room and suddenly she started to laugh. "I could pour boiling water on him for you," she said. "Want to?" she added conspiratorially, widening her eyes. "Let's pour boiling water on him!"

Ricky snorted at the idea. Then he stood up and led her through the dining room and living room and out to the front door.

"Did you really stop?" Josephine asked. "Tell me the truth."

"I stopped."

"Come back here tomorrow morning and tell me that. Come for breakfast."

"Okay, fine. I will."

He stepped into the crackling air, and she closed the door. Through the small windowpane she watched him get into Alfie's van and drive away, and then she walked down the front hall to the kitchen. She was about to make her tea when she noticed her purse on the counter with its flap unlatched. Inside, the snap was undone on her red leather wallet. She walked her fingertips through its worn compartments. He'd taken thirty of her forty bucks, and her extra pack of cigarettes, too. He wasn't going to Charlene's. He was going to gangland to buy some dope and nod out somewhere. Once, back when Josephine was legally charged with his life, she'd gone to the bad part of Boston to find her son. Half the stores were boarded up and the big theater's marquee was blank. She found Ricky and his friends in a dive called Vaughn's Rib Room, where a rack of baby backs was only \$6.99, and that included the slaw, the beans, the slice of white bread, and the realistic sound of pistol fire out in the darkness nearby—no extra charge for the gunplay unless you got hit through the window while minding your business and gnawing on a bone, in which case your luck was so bad that it was now or later for you anyway, and it might as well be now. □



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

JOHN WILKES, ESQ., AND DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON

DR. JOHNSON ABHORRED John Wilkes as a man of no principle. Wilkes was a member both of the notorious Hell-Fire Club and of Parliament; he was a demagogue, a rake. A stay in the Tower for a near-treasonous pamphlet made him a hero as a defender of liberty, but Johnson scorned him as a "patriot" in the eighteenth-century sense—a factious disturber of the government. "Patriotism," Johnson sniffed, "is the last refuge of a scoundrel."

Still, Wilkes was good company and frequented London's best dinner tables. But Edward Dilly, the bookseller, was careful not to invite him with Johnson—until the mischievous Boswell proposed just that. Dilly was horrified, but Boswell promised to arrange it.

Boswell: "Mr. Dilly, Sir, sends his respectful compliments," and would Johnson dine there Wednesday next? He would. Boswell: "Provided, Sir, I suppose, that the company . . . is agreeable?" What if Mr. Dilly asked some of his patriotic friends—like Jack Wilkes? "What is

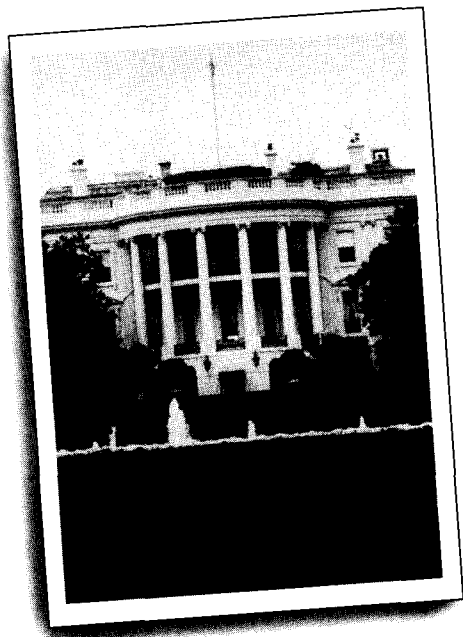
that to me, Sir?" Johnson said huffily. "As if I could not meet any company whatever, occasionally."

Wednesday (May 15, 1776) came, and at dinner Wilkes seated himself next to Johnson. He was determined to please. "Pray, give me leave, Sir," he said, carving Johnson a juicy slice of veal, and then, "a little of the stuffing—some gravy . . . a squeeze of this orange, or the lemon, perhaps?" Johnson's surly response gradually softened. The names of mutual acquaintances came up, and Wilkes scoffed at those he knew Johnson to have mocked, but the latter would let no one speak ill of his friends but himself. Of Scotland, however—that was another matter. Boswell had taken him there—a barren place! Johnson and Wilkes began sparring with jibes against Scotland. Poor Boswell, Johnson said, hardly knew real civility for living among savages in Scotland and rakes in London. Wilkes beamed. "Except," he said, "when he is with grave, sober, decent people, like you and me."

—Nancy Caldwell Sorel

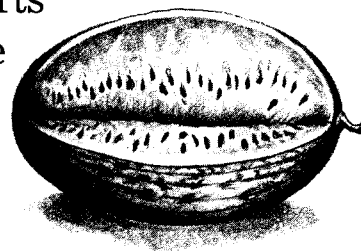
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*An authoritative summary of how Oliver Stone
distorted an already discredited account of John F. Kennedy's assassination—a distortion
that, like many film histories, threatens to become the story we accept*

THE SECOND COMING OF JIM GARRISON

BY EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN

MORE THAN A century before the advent of the Hollywood pseudodocumentary Karl Marx suggested that all great events and personalities in world history happen twice: "the first time as tragedy, the second as farce." Oliver Stone's film *JFK* is a case in point.

In 1969, when the conspiracy-to-kill-Kennedy trial brought by New Orleans's District Attorney Jim Garrison collapsed, his entire case that the accused, Clay Shaw, had participated in an assassination plot turned out to be based on nothing more than the hypnotically induced story of a single witness. This witness, Perry Raymond Russo, testified that he had had no conscious memory of his own conspiracy story before he had been drugged, hypnotized, and fed hypothetical circumstances by the district attorney and his staff about the plot he was supposed to have witnessed. To the dismay of his supporters, this was the essence of Garrison's show trial: a witness who acknowledged he could not, after his bizarre treatment, separate fantasy from reality. After that, Garrison's meretricious prosecution of the case was considered by the press to be, as *The New York Times* said in an editorial, "one of the most disgraceful chapters in the history of American jurisprudence." In this debacle Garrison was exposed as a man who had recklessly disregarded the truth when it suited his purposes.



Then, in 1991, a generation later, in the film *JFK*, Garrison re-emerged phoenixlike from the debris as the truth-seeking prosecutor (played by Kevin Costner) who brilliantly solves the mystery of the Kennedy assassination. In this version there is no hypnosis: Garrison resourcefully uncovers cogent evidence that Clay Shaw, in New Orleans, participated in the planning of the Dallas ambush of President Kennedy along with two confederates: David William Ferrie (played by Joe Pesci), a homosexual soldier of fortune, and Lee Harvey Oswald (played by Gary Oldman). Garrison establishes that this trio all worked for the CIA, and were recruited into a con-

spiracy to seize power in Washington.

Partly filmed in a grainy semidocumentary style, with newsreels and amateur footage incorporated into it, *JFK* appears to reveal the truth about the Kennedy assassination. From the moment it was released, its director, Oliver Stone, so passionately defended its factual accuracy that he became, for all practical purposes, the new Garrison. What could be more appropriate in the age of media than replacing a crusading district attorney with a crusading filmmaker as the symbol of the truth-finder in society? In this capacity Oliver Stone-Garrison played out his case on television news programs and talk shows, in magazines, and on the op-ed pages of newspapers. He met with congressional leaders and, as the original Gar-

ri-son had done a quarter of a century before, used his visibility to focus attention on the possibility that the government was hiding the truth about the Kennedy assassination. In exploiting the official secrecy, Stone proved far more successful than his predecessor at rousing interest in releasing the classified files pertaining to the assassination.

Where Jim Garrison failed to build a plausible conspiracy case against Clay Shaw, how did Oliver Stone succeed? The answer is that whereas Garrison attempted only to coax, intimidate, and hypnotize witnesses into providing him with incriminating evidence, Oliver Stone fabricated for his film the crucial evidence and witnesses that were missing in real life—even when this license required deliberately falsifying reality and depicting events that never happened.

CONSIDER, FOR EXAMPLE, THE WAY STONE FABRICATED Ferrie's dramatic confession to Garrison in a hotel room only hours before Ferrie died. In reality, and also in Jim Garrison's account of the case, David Ferrie steadfastly maintained his innocence, insisting that he did not know Lee Harvey Oswald and that he had no knowledge of any plot to kill Kennedy. The last person known to speak to Ferrie was George Lardner, of *The Washington Post*, whom Ferrie met with from midnight to 4:00 A.M. on February 22, 1967. During this interview Ferrie described Garrison's investigation as a "witch hunt." Several hours later Ferrie died of a cerebral hemorrhage.

In *JFK*, Oliver Stone invents his own version of Ferrie's last night. *JFK* shows Ferrie not being calmly interviewed by a reporter in his home but being doggedly interrogated by Jim Garrison and his colleagues in a hotel suite until he breaks down and confesses. Ferrie names his CIA controller and, in rapid-fire succession, admits in the film everything he denied in real life. He acknowledges that he taught Oswald "everything." He then explains that not only does he know Clay Shaw but also he is being blackmailed by him and controlled by him. He admits that he still works for the CIA—along with Oswald, Shaw, "the Cubans," and the "shooters" in Dallas. He displays intimate knowledge of the conspiracy by explaining that the shooters were recruited without being told whose orders they were carrying out. He tells Garrison that the plot is "too [expletive] big" to be investigated, implying that powerful figures are behind it, and that, because they know Ferrie is now talking, they have issued a "death warrant" for him.

After Ferrie leaves Garrison and returns to his apartment, he is shown being chased, held down, and murdered by a bald man who forces pills down his throat. The murderer is shown in other fictional scenes to be associated with Shaw, Oswald, and the anti-Castro Cubans. When Garrison arrives at the murder scene and finds the empty bottle of pills, he concludes that Ferrie was murdered, which gives Ferrie's earlier revelations to Garrison the force of a deathbed confession. (In reality the coroner ruled that Ferrie had died from natural causes—a verdict that Garrison, as the empowered authority, did not contest.)

Oliver Stone's transformations, as seen in the table below, involve more than some trivial cinematic contrivances. They provide the critical linkage for the conspiracy. Ferrie's confession connects the team of anonymous shooters in Dallas with Clay Shaw and Lee Harvey Oswald in New Orleans, and other CIA "untouchables." It changes the entire story—just as a story about the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg would be changed if a film fabricated a fictional scene showing the Rosenbergs confessing to J. Edgar Hoover that they were part of a Communist conspiracy to steal atomic secrets.

Ferrie's false confession is not an isolated bit of license. Throughout *JFK*, in dozens of scenes, Oliver Stone substitutes fiction for fact when it advances his case. He free-wheelingly uses facts from the two books he represents as being the bases for *JFK* (*On the Trail of the Assassins*, by Jim Garrison, and *Crossfire: The Plot That Killed Kennedy*, by Jim Marrs). He makes especially effective use of this substitution technique when it comes to witnesses. Here, like all fictionalizers, he has an advantage over fact-finders: he can artfully fashion his replacement witnesses to meet the audience's criteria for what is credible. His substitution of the fictional Willie O'Keefe (played by Kevin Bacon) for Garrison's flawed witness, Perry Raymond Russo, is a case in point.

Russo, it will be recalled, was the sole witness Garrison had to the plot that was allegedly planned in Ferrie's apartment. But his credibility suffered from three problems.

First, there was the memory lapse. Not until four years after the assassination did Russo tell his incriminating story, and then only after he had been rendered semiconscious with sodium pentothal and instructed by a hypnotist to imagine that he was watching an important discussion "about assassinating somebody."

Second, there were inconsistent identifica-

FERRIE'S LAST INTERVIEW		
	In Actuality	In <i>JFK</i>
Ferrie is:	At home, relaxed	In a hotel suite, in panic
With:	Reporter Lardner	D.A. Garrison and assistants
Ferrie:	1) Denies knowing Oswald 2) Never mentions Shaw 3) Does not discuss the CIA 4) Denies knowing of a plot	1) Admits training Oswald 2) Admits Shaw controls him 3) Admits being in the CIA 4) Describes plot details Says Oswald and Shaw are CIA Talks of trained shooters
Death:	Ruled natural	Ferrie shown murdered by Cuban associate of Shaw's

tions. According to the statement from his first interrogation, Russo, when shown photographs of Shaw, said that he had seen him from afar but had never met him. Subsequently he changed his story to say that he had met Shaw at Ferrie's apartment. Later he told a homicide officer that he was not sure the man he had met was Shaw.

Third, there was his misidentification of Oswald. Russo claimed that the man introduced to him as "Leon Oswald" had a beard in September of 1963 and was Ferrie's roommate. Oswald was clean-shaven at that time, and the roommate of his wife, Marina. (Ferrie's roommate at the time did have a beard.)

Whereas Garrison was stuck with this contradictory testimony, Oliver Stone was not. He simply substituted Willie O'Keefe, who had none of the real witness's deficiencies.

Unlike Russo, a heterosexual with no plausible means of access to Shaw's secret life, O'Keefe is fashioned as a handsome male prostitute who has been Shaw's lover and drug partner for more than a year. Moreover, he is a fascist and a Kennedy-hater—a political stance that might explain why he would be privy to a discussion on a topic as sensitive as the assassination plan. Also unlike Russo, who popped up only after Ferrie's death, seeking publicity on local television, O'Keefe contacts Garrison before Ferrie's death—even before Garrison's investigation has become public—from state prison. He is serving time for prostitution, and he offers to cooperate with Garrison (whom he finds physically attractive) because he has "no reason to lie" and presumably because doing so might lead to a reduction in his prison sentence.

O'Keefe displays no memory lapses requiring drugs or hypnosis. He voluntarily relates a coherent story: Ferrie introduced him to Shaw in the summer of 1962, and Shaw immediately hired him to participate in elaborate orgies with him and Ferrie. In the course of this relationship O'Keefe met Shaw's associates, such as Oswald, whom he has no problem identifying as beardless, and the anti-Castro Cuban mercenaries, including the bald one who murders Ferrie. At one late-night meeting in

Ferrie's apartment, after the Cubans depart, Ferrie, Oswald, and Shaw discuss the plan for killing Kennedy, including the "triangulation of crossfire."

The fictional O'Keefe's story is supported by Ferrie's fictional confession, which is then given weight by Ferrie's fictional murder by the fictional bald Cuban introduced in O'Keefe's story. Since Oliver Stone's audience is not apprised of the substitutions of fiction for fact, this cross-corroboration makes the New Orleans plot plausible.

THE NEW ORLEANS CONSPIRACY IS A RELATIVELY low-level one, involving homosexuals, anti-Castro Cuban killers, Oswald, and CIA employees. To link it to the central conspiracy in Washington, D.C.,

Oliver Stone resorts to a *deus ex machina*: a fictional Deep Throat-style anonymous source who meets with Garrison and identifies himself only as "X."

X is a cynical man of military bearing (played by Donald Sutherland). He meets Garrison just after Ferrie's death, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. When asked by Garrison whether he is with the CIA, X refuses to identify the agency he represents but tells Garrison he is "close—closer than you think."

After describing the Warren Commission report as "fiction," X launches into a remarkable fifteen-minute exposition of the assassination. He discloses that Kennedy was executed

by a device "as old as the crucifixion—a military firing squad." It was not some low-level plot but a full-blown "coup d'état." Its purpose was to prevent Kennedy from withdrawing from Vietnam and ending the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Since the military-industrial complex could not afford to lose the business from both conflicts—"a hundred billion dollars" in war contracts was at stake—it ordered the assassination. The secret team of generals and officials who carried out this coup also arranged the cover story that framed Oswald as the lone assassin, and they sabotaged the telephone system in Washington after the assassination so that no news would leak out. "Nothing was left to chance," X adds.

X explains that two weeks before Kennedy was due to



arrive in Dallas, X was ordered by his superior, "General Y," to accompany a group of officials on a trip to the South Pole. If he hadn't been sent away, he would have had among his "routine duties" that of arranging "additional security" for the President in Dallas—which would have made the assassination impossible. When he returned and realized what had happened, he deduced that there could have been only one reason for Y to send him away at this critical time: to prevent him from interfering with the assassination plan in Dallas. X tells Garrison that he cannot publicly reveal these secrets, because before he could testify he would be "arrested and gagged and maybe sent to an institution, maybe worse," but he urges him to "make arrests" anyhow. With the New Orleans conspiracy now connected to the Washington conspiracy, Garrison returns to New Orleans and arrests Clay Shaw.

In reality Garrison never met such a source. Rather than going to Washington, D.C., he spent the week between Ferrie's death and Shaw's arrest filling in the lapsed memory of the new witness, Russo. Even though the original Garrison never met X, Oliver Stone, the new Garrison, retained X as one of his technical advisers for *JFK*. This supersource, whose story was anachronistically slipped into *JFK*, is based on Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty. Before his retirement from the Air Force, in January of 1964, Colonel Prouty worked in the Pentagon in the Office of Special Operations—which provided planes and other equipment for covert activities. In November of 1963 Prouty was sent to the South Pole, but here the similarity between the real and the fictional X ends.

Unlike the character in the film, Prouty did not count among his duties providing "additional security" for the President's motorcades—according to the Secret Service, which did have that responsibility. There is no record that he served as a liaison with the Secret Service. In his essay "The Anatomy of Assassination," in *Uncloaking the CIA* (1978), edited by Howard Frazier, Prouty alleged that the President's security had been withdrawn not because he had any personal knowledge that it actually had

been but simply because the Secret Service had failed to make sure, as is required by its "manual," that all windows on the parade route were sealed and to post countersniper teams on the roofs. The Secret Service also neglected, according to Prouty, to maintain the speed of the President's car at "the usual 44 miles per hour." In fact these procedures were not required by the Secret Service, the CIA, or the Air Force Military Police. And X's logic that there was a connection between his pre-retirement trip and the events in Dallas has no apparent basis in reality.

Aside from advising Oliver Stone, Prouty has maintained extremely active involvements with other conspiracy-hunters. He has served, for example, as a consultant

to Lyndon LaRouche's far-right National Democratic Policy Committee, at a conference of which he provided a presentation comparing the U.S. government's prosecution of LaRouche (for conspiracy and mail fraud) to the prosecution of Socrates; as a board member of the Populist Action Committee, where he joined Robert Weems, a former activist in the Ku Klux Klan, and John Rarick, a prominent figure in the White Citizens' Council; and as a featured speaker for the Liberty Lobby, the anti-civil-rights organization whose founder, Willis Carto, also set up the Institute for Historical Review, which has disseminated books and videotapes alleging, among

other things, that the Nazi death camps in Europe were fictions devised by Zionist propaganda to justify the donation of tax money to Israel. (It also distributes Prouty's own book, *The Secret Team: The CIA and Its Allies in Control of the United States and the World*.)

Prouty has exposed the machinations of putative global conspiracies, too. For example, at the Liberty Lobby's annual Board of Policy Convention in 1990 he presented a special seminar, "Who Is the Enemy?" Prouty laid the blame for the high price of oil on a cabal that had systematically plotted to shut down oil pipelines in the Middle East. "Why?" he asked, and explained to the seminar: "Because of the Israelis. That's their business, on behalf of the oil companies. That's why they get \$3 billion a year



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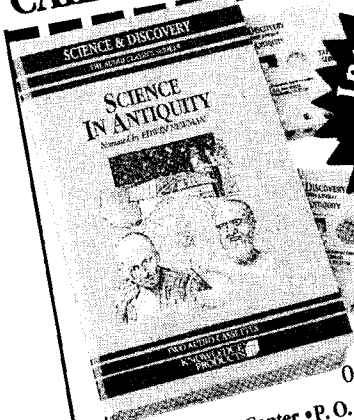
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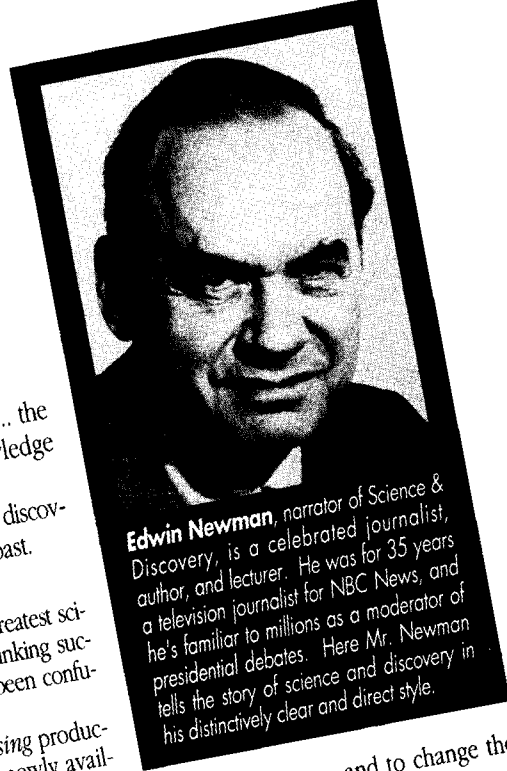
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from the U.S. taxpayers.” His enemies list also includes the CIA, usurers, school textbooks, the media, political parties, banks, federal crisis-planning exercises, and the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council (which, according to Prouty, stage-managed, along with David Rockefeller, the liquidation of the Berlin Wall to profit from “the rubles and the gold”).

This is the intellectual provenance of the man Oliver Stone chose as one of his technical advisers—and of the man called X. In *JFK*, X displays secret knowledge about the ultimate conspiracy behind the Kennedy assassination when he tells Garrison that the “how” and the “who” of the shooting are “just scenery” to hide the “why.” The “why” proceeds from the unbreakable rule of the power elite that “the organizing principle of any society . . . is for war.” Because Kennedy violated this rule by taking steps to end the war, he had to die.

THE SECRET KNOWLEDGE THAT PROUTY/X HAD about the elite’s organizing principle and the “war system” derives from a very special source—a study supposedly suppressed by the Kennedy Administration, which Prouty discussed on the Liberty Lobby’s *Radio Free America* on December 14, 1989. He explained then that this study was so secret that the group of “power brokers” who conducted it met “in an underground storage and security area,” called “Iron Mountain,” in the Hudson Valley of New York. The explosive issue they addressed was: Could America survive “if and when a condition of permanent peace should arrive”? Their conclusion, which X would echo almost word for word in *JFK* two years later, was that “the organization of a society for the possibility of war is its principal political stabilizer”; without a believable possibility that it would engage in war “no government can long remain in power,” and consequently “the elimination of war . . . implies the inevitable elimination of national sovereignty.” Prouty explained on the radio program and in a subsequent issue of *Spotlight*, the newspaper of the Liberty Lobby, that these conclusions came directly from the report by the Iron Mountain group—of which he had obtained a copy (and which the Institute for Historical Review wanted to sell but couldn’t, for copyright reasons). He concluded the program by talking about the “high cabal . . . calling the shots.”

Prouty quoted from the *Report From Iron Mountain on the Possibility and Desirability of Peace*—and he failed to realize that it was a complete hoax. There was no group meeting in an underground storage vault in Iron Mountain, no study of the elimination of the threat of war, no report from power brokers. The *Report From Iron Mountain* was a brilliant spoof of think tanks written by the political satirist Leonard Lewin in 1967. Victor Navasky,

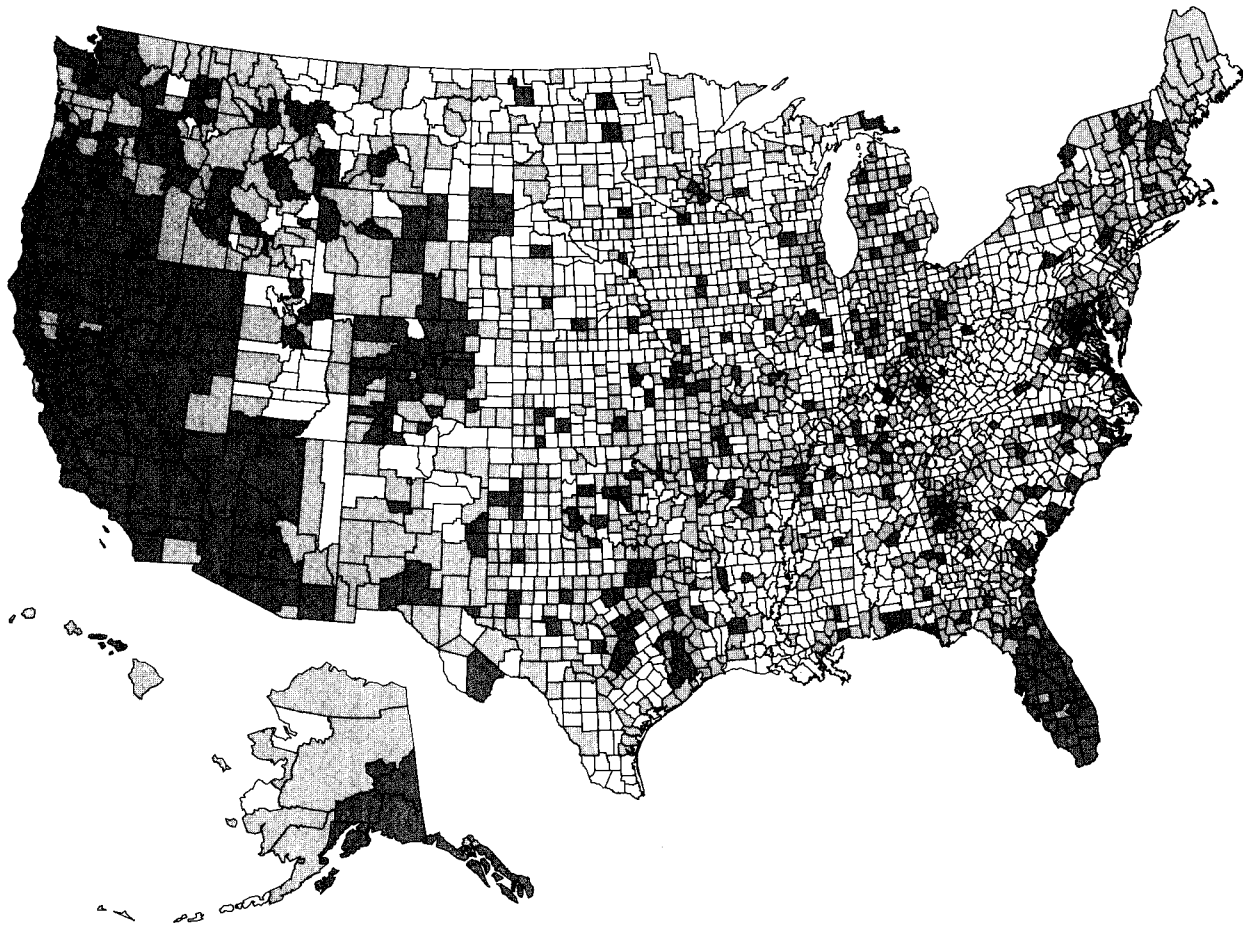
then the editor of the satiric magazine *Monocle*, who thought up the idea, persuaded Dial Press to put Lewin’s book on its nonfiction instead of its fiction list, a choice that resulted in a front-page news story in *The New York Times* about the “suppressed” report. Subsequently it was revealed by the author for what it was. What neither the author nor Navasky could foresee was that this hoax would re-emerge a quarter of a century later, first in radical-right radio broadcasts and Liberty Lobby publications, and then as the connective logic of Oliver Stone’s film.

Not only did Prouty prove unable to distinguish a mirthful hoax from somber reality but Stone himself proved unable to separate the false scenes in *JFK* from the reality of Garrison’s case. At a Town Hall meeting in New York in March of last year he again compared himself to Garrison, saying that they were two of four people libeled by the media for representing an “unofficial history” of the assassination (the other two in this quartet are, according to Stone, Oswald and President Kennedy). The panel at Town Hall included Norman Mailer, Nora Ephron, and me, and it was moderated by Victor Navasky, now the editor of *The Nation*. When I pointed out to Stone that his depiction of Ferrie’s confession to Garrison was false history, he replied that even though such a meeting never happened, he had “sketched” it into Ferrie’s last night because Ferrie was at an earlier point “raving and ranting” to one of Garrison’s investigators. Stone saw no problem in having misrepresented fiction as fact in this way in his “unofficial history.” A series of seven fictitious scenes in the film depicted someone pasting Oswald’s head on a photograph of another gunman’s body in order to frame Oswald; to a person who questioned this fiction by meticulously citing the actual photographic evidence, Stone responded, “I don’t know where you get your facts.” Moreover, he later not only vouched for the bona fides of Prouty but also presented as pure truth X’s thesis that the “military-industrial complex” killed Kennedy so that he would not end the war in Vietnam.

Oliver Stone demonstrates yet again how easily pierced is the thin membrane that separates the mainstream media from the festering pools of fantasy on their periphery. What he allowed to ooze into *JFK* from these fringes, with the help of his technical adviser, is the tormenting concept that “secret teams” and “high cabals” fabricated entire historic events to fool Stone, Prouty, and us—a concept that incorporates into its schema even the Iron Mountain hoax. In doing so, Oliver Stone organized a flight from reality. *JFK* thus completes the journey from fact to fantasy that began with the flawed Warren Commission report in 1964. What has been lost en route is the truth. □

AT LAST COUNT

HOUSE TO HOUSE



IN THE UNITED STATES," Alexis de Tocqueville observed in 1835, "a man builds a house in which to spend his old age, and he sells it before the roof is on." The average American occupies twelve or thirteen residences in the course of a lifetime, roughly twice as many as the average person in Britain or France does, and four times as many as the typical Irish person.

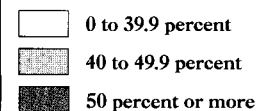
Why are Americans so mobile? One reason is the U.S. divorce rate, which is among the highest in the world. Economic opportunity is also more dispersed geographically in the United States than it is in many countries, where the locus of economic, political, and cultural life may be a single big city. Tocqueville speculated that the absence of rigid class distinctions in America, which gave the average man greater opportunity than he would have had in Europe, also produced in him "anxiety, fear, and regret," and led him "perpetually to change his plans and his abode."

As the map above shows, mobility rates are not uniform nationwide. In the period 1985–1990 people in the western states and in Florida were considerably more mobile

than their countrymen elsewhere. This is owing in part to the relatively high divorce rate in the West and Florida and in part to the booming economy in much of the Sunbelt in the late 1980s, which lured many people from other areas. An influx of long-distance migrants eventually leads to an increase in short-distance moving: long-distance migrants tend to move yet again—locally, this time—when they become more familiar with their new place of residence.

During the past three decades there have been two major streams of long-distance migration: one from the northeast quadrant of the United States to Florida, and the second from the northeast quadrant to California. Two other significant streams have run from the Southwest, principally Texas, to California, and from California to Washington and Oregon.

Percentage of people five years old or older who moved to a different house, 1985–1990:



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

—Rodger Doyle

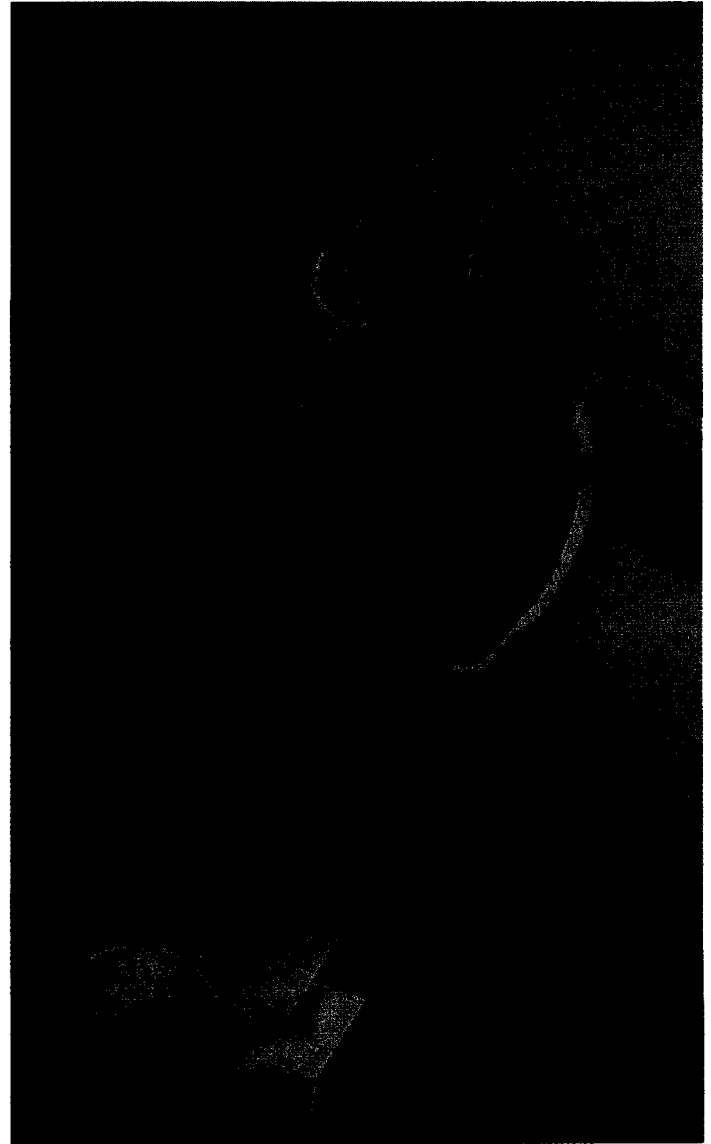
A pragmatic school of industrial designers aims to make the controls of a machine—be it a VCR, a telephone, or a nuclear reactor—reflect the people who will use the machine rather than the engineers who want to show off new technology

THE COMPLEXITY PROBLEM

BY JOHN SEDGWICK

IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT THE comfort of a good fit between man and machine is largely absent from the technology of the information age. Consider the humble wristwatch, which has been transformed into a kind of wrist-mounted personal computer, with a digital display and a calculator pad whose buttons are too small to be pressed by a human fingertip. In fact, the very usefulness of the digitization of time is open to question. People generally care less about knowing the time to the nanosecond than about seeing how long they've got until lunch. With digital watches that requires a little figuring (the purpose of the calculator pad, perhaps), whereas with the old analog watches, the ones with hands, it's clear at a glance. Worse, by replacing the watch's conventional stem-winding mechanism with a mystifying arrangement of tiny buttons, the manufacturers created a watch that was very hard to reset. One leading manufacturer was distressed to discover that a line of its particularly advanced digitals was being returned as defective by the thousands, even though the watches actually worked perfectly well. Further investigation revealed that they were coming back soon after purchase and thereafter in two large batches—in the spring and the fall, when the time changed.

Charles Mauro, a consultant in New York City, is a prominent member of a branch of engineering generally known as ergonomics, or human-factors—the only field specifically addressing the question of product usability. Mauro, who has won many awards for industrial design



and human-factors research, was brought in to provide some help to the watch manufacturer, which was experiencing what Mauro calls “the complexity problem.” With “complexity” defined as “a fundamental mismatch between the demands of a technology and the capabilities of its user,” the term nicely captures the essence of our current technological predicament. That mismatch might be measured by the increasing length of the instruction manuals required to work so many of the new gizmos. About the digital-watch manufacturer Mauro asks, “Can you believe that the company actually expected you to carry around a thirty-page manual in your wallet?”

According to Mauro and other experts in the field, the solution to many such problems lies in a new approach to technological development called user-centered design. As the name suggests, this strategy takes the ultimate user into account from the very beginning of a product's development. Elementary as it sounds, this user-centered approach could drastically revamp American business.



Domestic Confusion

THE COMPLEXITY PROBLEM IS EVERYWHERE, but it is most apparent around the house. Americans' deficiencies in programming the VCR are so well known that they have become a staple of comedy. According to one consumer survey, a third of all VCR owners have given up trying to program their machines for time-delayed viewing. It is a measure of Americans' desperation that a multi-million-dollar industry has sprung up to sell other technology, involving reference numbers, to provide assistance. And our troubles are not confined to the VCR. According to a survey by the marketing specialist Laurence Feldman, 50 percent of Americans can't work other programmable equipment either, and, thanks to the ubiquitous computer chip, that now includes almost everything: telephones, fax machines, thermostats, even coffee makers. Soon we may add the house itself to the list, as plans proceed to

link up these various unworkable components into a single unworkable whole, the "smart house," in which occupants will run everything—security system, coffee pot, kitchen stove—from a single remote-control unit at their fingertips.

When confronted by some mystifying piece of high-tech gadgetry, consumers naturally feel that there is something wrong with them if they can't figure it out. In truth it is usually not their fault. Mauro attributes the confusion to the fact that most products are "technology-driven," their nature determined not by consumers and their needs and desires but by engineers who are too often entranced by the myriad capabilities of the microprocessors that lie at the devices' hearts. "They have this idea that if they *can* do something, they *should*," he says. The main effect of the extra capabilities is in a great many cases to badly muddle the essential functions. Mauro was once hired by a sewing-machine manufacturer disturbed to learn that customers buying its latest high-

tech sewing machines were abandoning them after a brief trial period and returning to their previous, supposedly outmoded models. Mauro quickly figured out why: "The new machines required as much mechanical training and information processing as it took to fly a light plane on instruments."

Donald Norman, a cognitive scientist now at Apple Computer, has written about such design screw-ups in *The Design of Everyday Things*. Besides the malady he terms "feature-itis" he describes a number of common design bloopers that boost technological complexity. There is "bad mapping," in which, for example, the burners of a stove are arranged in a square but the controls are in a row, necessitating labels like "RF" and "LR" to designate which knob governs which burner; a lack of "forced constraints" to ensure that a user will perform each programming step correctly before going on to the next one; and the absence of feedback, such as the beep emitted by a pressed telephone key, to reassure the user that a system is working. But beneath it all, Norman believes, the fundamental confusion is due to the essentially inscrutable nature of the technology itself. "In the mechanical systems of the old days you could wiggle a knob or a lever and see something happen," he says. "Today's technology concerns information that is invisible and abstract, so the designers have to give a sense of control by different means."

All too often those means are dense instruction manuals, which Mauro regards as the clearest sign of design failure. The best-designed products require no instructions at all: their appearance tells you what to do as surely as a coffee mug's handle says "Hold here." This notion is reinforced by product-liability laws, which first consider the product's physical design, then its labeling, and finally its instructions. In the minds of most engineers that list is inverted.

According to Alan Frank, a consumer-products specialist at the telecommunications firm BNR Ltd., the "manufacturer's showroom mentality" also adds complexity. The extra features are merely an eye-catching consumer come-on, not unlike the chrome on a 1952 DeSoto; they are never intended to serve any real purpose. In their eagerness to outdo their rivals, many manufacturers engage in a kind of features warfare. If one company offers twelve buttons, another must offer fifteen. Manufacturers themselves are under few illusions that the added features do anyone any good. Amar Bose, the founder and chairman of Bose Corporation, has worked for years to simplify the controls on his company's stereo equipment. He is always shocked by the graphic equalizers he encounters in rental cars. "It makes the music sound *absolutely terrible*," he says, putting his hands to his ears.

The need for product differentiation produces another misery for consumers, which is that no two products in any category ever work the same way. In the human-factors world this is known as the negative-transfer problem,

and it has added a good deal to consumers' cognitive overload. To take one small but revealing example, the telephone industry is engaged in a heated dispute over the question of where to add the letters Q and Z, now missing from conventional keypads, to complete the alphabet for the newly automated caller-interactive switchboards. Some companies put the Q and Z on the 1 key, which otherwise has no letters. Others, led by AT&T, have put them in alphabetical order on the 7 and 9 keys, even though that has meant adding a fourth letter to each. "You wouldn't believe how many studies have been done on this," says Miriam Kotsonis, a technical manager at AT&T's Bell Laboratories. "We concluded, You don't mess with the alphabet."

Matching Machines to Men

FROM ROBOTS TO LASERS, INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY is infinitely more high-powered and challenging than the household variety. Companies can pay their employees to devote their working lives to learning how to operate a single piece of equipment, and they take full advantage of this fact, ratcheting up the cognitive demands to the point where they pose a real strain and in some cases a positive hazard. These machines are VCRs from hell.

Stuart Card, a cognitive psychologist and computer scientist at Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), holds up a paperback-sized Hewlett Packard calculator. It performs 2,100 functions, all of them explained in a 700-page manual. Card marvels, "You can even set it to perform certain functions at certain times—say, to do a symbolic evaluation of an integral at 12:04 P.M. on January 12th in the year 2014." Not that he knows why anyone would want to. "They brook no compromise at Hewlett-Packard. Their idea is that if you can't work this thing, *you're not good enough*."

Some users, not surprisingly, have come to resent the computers that have transformed their work lives so drastically. Mauro was once called in to a newly automated paper mill where workmen were sabotaging the system by deliberately entering incorrect information into the computers and, if all else failed, hosing the computers down until they shorted out. One might dismiss them as Luddites, but Mauro came to a different conclusion. "The workmen were frustrated that the company demanded greater productivity from them while depriving them of the control over the machinery to deliver it," he says. "They were caught in a terrible bind."

Enticed by the potential cost savings of eliminating jobs, companies have added technology at an impressive clip, including desktop publishing equipment, laser-scanning cash registers, and factory robots. "The standard approach in the United States is to add technology and then figure out what problems you've got," says William Rouse, the CEO of Search Technology, a software prod-

MANY MANUFACTURERS ENGAGE IN A KIND OF FEATURES WARFARE. IF ONE COMPANY OFFERS TWELVE BUTTONS, ANOTHER MUST OFFER FIFTEEN. THE NEED FOR PRODUCT DIFFERENTIATION PRODUCES ANOTHER MISERY FOR CONSUMERS, WHICH IS THAT NO TWO PRODUCTS IN ANY CATEGORY EVER WORK THE SAME WAY.

ucts and engineering services firm. Oftentimes, as when unworkable VCRs spawned reference-number inputs, the solution to the problems is still more technology. With each round of technological intervention the human role grows more tightly circumscribed. This is the flip side of the complexity problem: just as people can be overtaxed by technology, they can be undertaxed as well.

In the early stages of the computer revolution it was tempting to view the emerging man-machine mismatch as an issue best addressed by ergonomics. The field has roots in Frederick Winslow Taylor's time-and-motion studies at the turn of the century, but it first flowered during the Second World War, when the fate of the Allies hinged on soldiers' ability to work complicated machinery. For example, Alphonse Chapanis, one of the fathers of the modern human-factors movement, examined the mysterious runway crashes of B-17s which composed one of the largest categories of noncombat accidents in the war. Chapanis discovered that the plane's cockpit had two identical toggle switches side by side, one to raise the flaps, the other to raise the landing gear. Exhausted at the end of a long flight, the pilots inadvertently pulled up the landing gear rather than the flaps. Their planes plunged down onto the tarmac and sometimes burst into flames. The Allies' human-factors work may have proved decisive in the air war, because it allowed pilots to fly fighter planes with less training than they might otherwise have needed.

After the war human-factors specialists worked to fit machines to men. They tended to focus on physical interaction, making endless anthropometric measurements to determine the range of human foot size, fingertip width, peripheral vision, hearing perception, color sensitivity, and the like. Such issues should certainly not be overlooked: the first wave of Japanese cars into the United States, for example, failed to catch on largely because their makers had underestimated the length of the average American's legs, and produced cars that felt cramped to U.S. buyers.

But there are other issues to be addressed. It is perhaps an index of the very complexity of the complexity problem that no one field can fully address it, and human factors is no exception. One reason that complexity has got-

ten so far out of hand is that it has come to reflect the divergent interests of the forces that shape the technology in the first place. "There are basically two camps," Charles Mauro says. "You've got the engineers and designers on the one side, and you've got the psychologists and the applied psychologists on the other.

The two groups are constitutionally unable to talk to each other. Basically, the psychologists define problems and the engineers propose solutions. The human-factors people get on a track where they think they're both designers and engineers, when in fact they're neither. But you get in real trouble when designers start thinking they're psychologists."

Most human-factors specialists are too physically oriented to address successfully the heavily cognitive issues imposed by today's technology. But then, few engineers are likely to give them a chance to, since engineers believe they can speak for the user perfectly well themselves. "Engineers have this idea that since I'm human and I'm an engineer, I'm a human engineer," Mauro says, referring to another term for a human-factors specialist. Such attitudes may explain why some human-factors professionals often do more work presenting expert testimony in product-liability cases than they do helping to design workable products in the first place.

Mauro has devised something he calls the User Merit Index, largely in order to present the usability issue in numerical terms that engineers can appreciate. His index plots the difficulty of various aspects of operating a technological device, from turning it on to programming it. He has been amazed by how avidly engineers will attack a problem once it has a number.

What Comes Naturally

THE ENGINEERS' BLINDNESS TO CONSUMERS' needs may be at the root of a deeper problem—how so much baffling technology enters the market. Donald Norman blames it on the "waterfall method": new technological equipment tumbles out of a corporation, never encountering a typical user until it is bought.

A growing number of technologists think that the development process should be reversed, and they speak of user-centered design as a means of scrupulously maintaining the user's perspective from start to finish, adding technology only where necessary to accomplish a particular task. Far from being a simple idea, user-centered design has a host of implications for technology around the house, at work, and in the military. The key princi-

ple is not to assume that more technology is always better. The design of AT&T's new videophone, for example, shows the advantages of the user-centered approach—and illustrates the battle a company often faces in trying to keep things simple. "To tell you the truth," says AT&T's Miriam Kotsonis, "when the company first thought about the product, the techies started to go wild, dreaming about a camcorder that lets you make phone calls, with a zoom lens and pans and tilts, and all that. But we said, 'Let's not make this so hard for our customers. Let's make this as natural as holding a telephone.'" In the debate between those who cared primarily about technology and those who cared primarily about users, the defining moment during the planning came over the question of how to handle "self-view" mode, which allows users to check their appearance before each transmission. The technologists were inclined to present the image as the camera sees it, with the left side of one's face on the right side of the screen. But the user-centered designers knew that people expected a mirror image, with the left side of the face on the left side of the screen, and in the end that is what they got. The technology was strained so that the user would not be. At its best, user-centered design can seem almost poetic in its grasp of human nature.

Much of the work is a matter of finding the "mental models"—like the mirror mode—by which users instinctively interpret a technology. Especially when the workings of a device are invisible, these models may very well be erroneous. For instance, many people set an electric burner on high thinking that it will heat up faster that way: they have the mental model of a gas stove, whose knobs actually do increase the heat's intensity. On an

electric stove, however, the knob is merely a switch that turns on the burner and then turns it off when a certain temperature is reached. A cause of fatal mining accidents was once the peculiar configuration of the controls on the trams shuttling along mineshafts. Each tram had a steering wheel that rose straight up from the floor, with a brake pedal on one side and an accelerator pedal on the other. There was no room to turn the tram around, so to reverse direction the driver simply took a seat on the other side of the steering wheel, whereupon what had been the brake became the accelerator, and vice versa. While this may sound ingenious, it proved disastrous. Some designers are trying to restore the logic to otherwise arbitrary controls through what they term "product semantics," which evokes a natural-seeming vocabulary for things like control knobs. A good example is the "up" and "down" designations for the power-window control introduced on the Ford Taurus. The "up" side is marked by a convex surface, the "down" side by a concave one.

No single approach will eliminate all the complexity problems posed by current technology. But user-centered design can certainly help solve these problems, if only by encouraging manufacturers to consider the needs and abilities of the average user early on in the product-development process. With VCRs a truly user-centered manufacturer would have recognized that programming them might prove extremely difficult for the average person and would have taken steps to simplify the process. It would have helped, for instance, to have the VCR's controls all visible, the way a typewriter's are, rather than having them be accessed by a series of complicated commands, like a personal computer's. By the same token, a user-centered digital-watch maker would not have tried

CALLING HIM HOME

The young man is crouched over a
roundel of wood.

He has sawn two rough semicircles
from the seat of an old school desk,
the grain hard and intractable,
fighting the teeth.

With hot glue from the pot
he has joined the trued surfaces.
Clamped for a week, they
are wedded together.

He feels with his hand
the flaws in this planing
and with a piece of broken glass,
blue glass, tracing its shadow,
he lifts from the surface
a sliver so thin
yellow light comes through it.

He will shape the circumference
with spokeshave and glass paper
to the line of his compass.
With labor and time,
awkwardly, without skill,
he will finish the little table
to give to his wife.

Seven months in the making,
forty years ago.

I am bringing in the selves.
I am calling him home.

—Leslie Norris



THE BOMBAY SAPHIRE MARTINI. AS INTERPRETED BY ADAM TIHANY.

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From USA Today's College and University Crime/Safety Survey, December 7th, 1990:

Adelphi University ranks number one — with a score of 3.9 out of a possible 4.0 — in this crime/safety survey of 497 colleges and universities across the nation. This survey grade is the most comprehensive measure of how safe an environment a school creates for its students.

From President Peter Diamandopoulos' "Statement of Educational Philosophy" of November 11, 1992:

Adelphi University does not offer the higher education that many students seem to seek, that parents appear to wish for their children, and that our society says we need.

Adelphi has set out to rediscover the lost vision of true higher education. We aim to give fresh power to the all-but-abandoned idea of education as preparation, achieved through the discipline of reason for the quest for truth.

What benefits do we propose for our students? We believe they will develop the skills of critical thinking, reading, writing and disputation — skills that are essential not only for the world of work, but which constitute the ground and means of every modern human achievement.

We intend them to grasp the fundamental knowledge, issues, values and debates that, for better and for worse, have formed — and continue to transform — the world in which we live.

Finally, we will provide them with the learning necessary to reflect sensitively and judiciously on their place and possibilities in the world.

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A GROWING NUMBER OF TECHNOLOGISTS THINK THAT THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS SHOULD BE REVERSED, AND THEY SPEAK OF USER-CENTERED DESIGN AS A MEANS OF SCRUPULOUSLY MAINTAINING THE USER'S PERSPECTIVE FROM START TO FINISH. THE KEY PRINCIPLE IS NOT TO ASSUME THAT MORE TECHNOLOGY IS ALWAYS BETTER.

to introduce a whole new, mind-bending system of resetting the time by pressing tiny buttons but would instead have relied on the well-established model of the stem-winding mechanism.

User-centered design would probably also encourage businesses simply to forget about certain ill-conceived products like the "smart house." "That's an engineer's idea of user-centered design," Mauro says. "Nobody went out and asked anyone if it would make his life at home better. Some engineer thought, 'Gee, we have all this great technology to control electrical systems and information systems. Let's try to do something with it.'" Mauro would even jettison the so-called user-agent, a piece of computer programming that is being advocated in some circles as a way of assisting us in certain routine aspects of our lives. In one configuration a user-agent could produce a customized newspaper from a computer network by pulling out articles on topics—the Texas Rangers, the stock price of Pfizer—that are known to be of interest to the individual reader. Mauro believes that such a strategy fails the essential test for user-centeredness because it overlooks one reason that most people read newspapers—for those odd bits of information that are interesting precisely because they are outside one's experience.

A piece of true user-centered design is currently in development to increase the "situation awareness" that is so critical for operators of highly automated systems. Called the Pilot's Associate, it is being created by the Air Force to assist the fighter pilot in managing all the information available in the cockpit. "It tells him what he needs to know when he needs to know it," says Richard Pew, of the consulting firm Bolt Beranek and Newman. The Pilot's Associate eschews simple just-leave-it-to-the-computer automation and instead works from the pilot's perspective to expand his capabilities. The same approach would help on commercial aircraft and in other risky enterprises, because it keeps the operator involved at all times.

User-centered computerization can also enhance a worker's feeling of control instead of depriving him of it. Mauro has helped redesign automated systems for paper manufacturers to boost the operators' awareness of the

process. "The workers used to hit the paper with an oak stick to get a feel for the variation in water content," he says. "No computer can do that any better. But it can do a lot of other things to help workers stay on top of their job. Instead of using the computer to cut the workers out of the loop through automation, we used it to plug them in."

User-centered design might even be able to forestall accidents, by dictating that mock-ups of a product be tested with users before it goes into full production. Too often manufacturers don't realize the hazards their products present until the liability lawsuits start coming in, which may explain why product-liability law is such a lucrative segment of the legal profession. Bolt Beranek and Newman has developed a piece of software dubbed the "mythical man" to test the cognitive workloads required by certain military flight-control equipment—while it is still in development. The company has also come up with something called simulator networking, or SIMNET, an extraordinarily realistic audio-video simulation of operating an M-1 tank, among other vehicles. SIMNET was designed to allow soldiers to train on a battalion of M-1s under battle conditions without actually being shot at. Because it is an easily alterable software package, SIMNET has proved helpful in testing the usability of new tank designs as well.

User-centered design applies no less to a large technology such as nuclear power. Mauro served on a nuclear-power task force in the aftermath of the near-meltdown at Three Mile Island. In his opinion, safety issues have been badly neglected by most nuclear designers. "Most nuclear power stations were designed primarily to accommodate the latest engineering theories and other political and technological issues," he says. "Only after they were built did anyone ask if human decision-making was properly factored into the system to make it safe." One way to build safety in from the start would be to require that all control rooms be highly standardized, as they are in France, to allow standardized training and also to facilitate outside intervention in an emergency. As it is, most individual nuclear plants in the United States have gone to considerable expense to produce exact reproductions of their control rooms for training purposes—yet most important skills are not directly transferable to any other plant. Similarly, user-centered design in the military could reduce the hazards of friendly fire for ground vehicles by having them emit the electronic signals indicating "ally" that have long been standard on military airplanes. Only after the calamities of the Persian Gulf War did military designers recognize this problem.

New Genres

USER-CENTERED DESIGN IS NOT EASY TO IMPLEMENT, first because it means revamping the way that technology reaches the marketplace, and second because it calls on a broad range of expertise—in marketing, human factors, psychology, sociology—that is rarely found in one place. “You can’t just hire a user-centered-design person,” Mauro says.

For these reasons very few companies in the country are doing much user-centered design. One of the few is Xerox, whose Palo Alto Research Center is using these principles to redesign the personal computer. “We want to use the incredible technological power inside the box to create simplicity outside,” says John Seely Brown, a chief scientist at Xerox and the director of PARC. Rather than blindly creating more features, PARC is harnessing the power of the computer to make it easier to use.

Apple’s Macintosh computer, using innovations developed at PARC, has set the standard for user-friendliness with its representational icons, such as a trash can (to get rid of a document) and a manila folder (to collect a group of files). But such symbols have served mainly to lessen resistance to computers; they do little to enhance the operator’s power over the machine once he or she has gotten going. Some even argue that user-friendliness actually reduces control for the experienced user, just as automatic transmission takes something away from drivers accustomed to standard transmission.

Xerox PARC has responded to this argument by trying to break the computer out of its box entirely, scrapping the conventional configuration of keyboard, central processing unit, and screen. In order to bring more power to a business meeting, one group has computerized a white board, adding such basic computer functions as saving and editing to a large computer screen on which users draw by hand.

Another PARC group, led by Stuart Card, has added depth to the flat world of conventional personal-computer screens through the use of 3D, virtual reality, and Disneyesque animation. This is perhaps the ultimate in user-centeredness: it allows the operator to all but enter into the data. The three-dimensionality means that there is a place to stash a lot of background data while the user focuses on the foreground. The resulting information is wonderfully concentrated. The system can present the top 600 senior managers of Xerox on a single screen by arranging the hierarchy in the shape of a twelve-inch-high 3D Christmas tree (this has the added benefit of showing the relationships among the various jobholders). Without depth such a list would shoot up to twelve feet high.

Depth also makes possible a more natural arrangement for clusters of information. Instead of the “windows” on the current generation of personal computers, Card’s team developed the concept of 3D “rooms,” one for each project, connected by “doors.” With 3D the system can

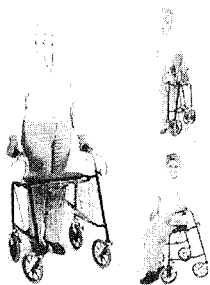
rely on the user’s natural intuitions, developed in the real world, and arrange the various entries like sections of a private library. It also allows the user to visualize a long list of files by viewing them as if on three sides of a folding screen, which angles out from and back into deep space as the files scroll by. More startling still, the system allows the mapping of information into lifelike 3D space through computer graphics. In one configuration, Card took me on a tour of the lab itself, occasionally veering off to land on a ceiling or settle on a wall. The world of the computer had become the world of the world.

User-centered design can go only so far to make a new technological system seem natural, though. Some operations simply have to be learned. For instance, does a computer’s UP arrow mean that the text goes up (and the screen down) or the screen goes up (and the text down)? Neither mental model is more intuitive than the other; the correct answer has to be memorized.

Over time such things become natural, just as driving a car does—both for individuals and for society. But it does take time. John Seely Brown explains the process for society as a whole as a matter of developing the appropriate technological “genres.” Just as popular culture has genres (the romance novel, the slasher flick) to help people interpret a new experience, so technology has genres (the motorcycle, the calculator) to help people come to terms with a new product. In Brown’s view, the problem is that technology is coming out faster than the “social mind” can establish genres for it. “In the old days there was real stability,” Brown says. “A piece of technology stayed on so long that we had a wonderful, socially constructed genre that helped us read the technology and inform our views. Now the technology is changing so fast that the genre doesn’t have time to get enacted or constructed.”

Brown believes that there are ways to stimulate the social mind to create new genres, the most valuable of which is to encourage the development of informal technological networks, where he believes the real learning takes place—coffee klatches, user groups, electronic mail. Unfortunately, these networks’ free-form conversations are too often stifled by corporations as unproductive.

Brown took me down a hall to look at a high-powered Xerox 5100 copier, which, he told me, embodies many of the principles he had just been discussing. The machine itself does the bulk of the work, of course, but it allows the operator to direct and oversee the process via an icon-laden touch-sensitive computer on top of the machine, which presents a visual display of the internal operation. The whole business seems somehow comfortable, human. The housing is clean and spare, the image of order. Should you need to investigate the cabinet underneath, the color scheme tells you most of what you need to know: red says don’t touch, green says grasp here. Brown shut the cabinet door and ran a hand lovingly along the smooth exterior. “This is very nicely designed,” he said with a smile. “The scary part is all inside.” □



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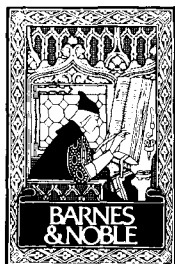


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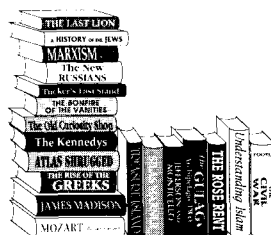
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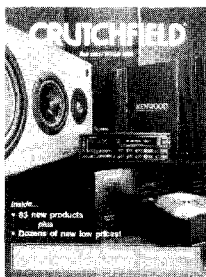
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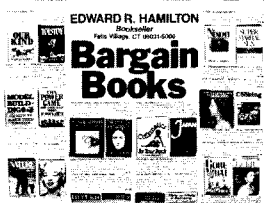
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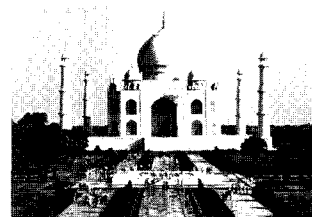
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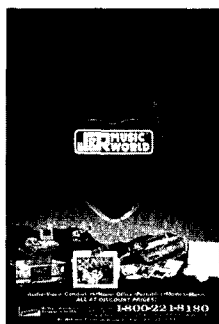
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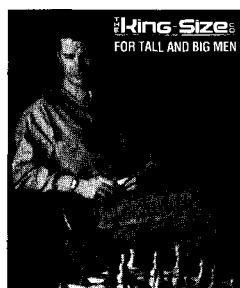
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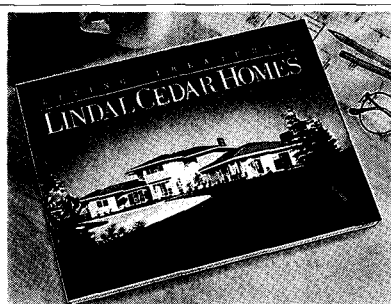
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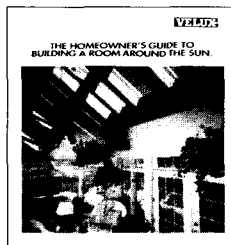
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Music



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Full of Foolish Song

New recordings of Guys and Dolls and other musicals

by Francis Davis

ON HIS FIRST visit to London, in the late 1950s, Miles Davis supposedly remarked that he wasn't much enjoying himself, because it pained him to hear English spoken that way. It sometimes pains me, on listening to a show album, to hear the songs of Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, or Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart performed "that way"—by which I mean as show tunes rather than as jazz. I feel this even though I realize that the fusty sopranos and rhythmless baritones making me cringe were usually the very singers for whom these

songs were crafted. Insofar as Broadway musical scores were the point of origin for most of the songs now regarded as standards, they are American popular music's mother tongue. But Broadway's most recognizable dialects are those of vaudeville and Viennese operetta, turn-of-the-century idioms that sound stilted to ears used to the relaxed pulsation of a Frank Sinatra or an Ella Fitzgerald.

By virtue of removing songs from their theatrical context, these and other superior jazz and pop singers gain the further advantage of needing to project only themselves, not scripted characters. The fact that in practically every instance I happened to hear their interpretations first probably explains my

preference for them. But another possible explanation is my having reached adolescence in the early 1960s, as part of the first rock-and-roll generation—a generation convinced (and not unreasonably so, on the basis of *My Fair Lady*, *The Music Man*, and *The Sound of Music*) that Lerner and Loewe, Meredith Willson, and Rodgers and Hammerstein were synonyms for "square." A decade or so later Broadway attempted to woo us by turning up the decibels on such frizzy monstrosities as *Godspell* and *Hair*, but this only succeeded in widening the breach.

Things have changed since then. Broadway musicals are no longer dismissed by arbiters of hip as bourgeois self-indulgence. Last year, in an edition of his *Village Voice* Consumer Guide, Robert Christgau—the rock critic most closely read by others in the field—wrote that only his preference for the original *Guys and Dolls* prevented him from choosing the CD *Guys and Dolls: The New Broadway Cast Recording* (RCA Victor 09026-61317) as one of his Pick Hits. Studio restorations of George and Ira Gershwin's shows of the 1920s, such as the recent *Lady, Be Good!* (Elektra Nonesuch 79308), are accorded the same respect as new recordings of Beethoven or Stravinsky, and greeted with only slightly less curiosity than greets collections of previously unissued Bob Dylan. And people who see George C. Wolfe's *Jelly's Last Jam*, about the life of Jelly Roll Morton, leave the theater debating the show's racial politics, just as they do after seeing a movie by Spike Lee.

My generation's belated embrace of musicals past and present is generally taken to be evidence that we now require a roomier fit in our music as well as in our jeans. Maybe so, although as someone who has always held Elvis and Sinatra in more or less equal esteem and who enjoys much of the rap and alternative rock that is supposed to baffle or enrage people my age, I can hardly offer myself as living proof. My own experience is no doubt atypical, but one aspect of it is probably typical enough. Until persuaded otherwise by massive doses of albums of Kurt Weill songs, the original-cast album of *West Side Story*, and productions of *Sweeney Todd* and a revival of *Oklahoma!* that somebody dragged me to in the late seventies, I had no use for Broadway. At around the time I discovered that

Preternatural bliss: Stubby Kaye in the 1955 film of Guys and Dolls

there were musicals I enjoyed as complete scores, I also realized that what had spoiled Broadway for me—along with rock-and-roll's frank adrenal pitch—were those awful film adaptations of the hit shows of the fifties and sixties.

Those movies, which amounted to the only exposure to Broadway many of us had, tended to be implausibly cast (*Oklahoma!*, with Rod Steiger as an ethnicized Jud who had apparently read *An Actor Prepares*, is one example among many) and to overextend the big production numbers to the point of tedium. Much worse, in order to "open up" a show for the screen and thus prevent it from being perceived as uncinematic, its producer or director would often change into matter-of-fact dialogue talk that was originally intended as a way to telegraph songs.

The point lost on these filmmakers was that musicals are inherently stylized, not naturalistic. The musical-theater scene that most persuasively sums up the medium's reason for being—and best reveals its capacity for magic—might be the one in Frank Loesser's *Guys and Dolls* in which Sky Masterson and Sister Sarah, just back from Havana and strolling through a quiet and nearly empty Times Square a few hours before dawn, serenade each other (and us) with "I've Never Been in Love Before," as luminous a song as any written for the stage. The crapshooter and the Salvation Army worker, tipsy with ardor and unembarrassed to be "full of foolish song," could be singing this duet for all of Broadway's brimming-over couples, all the Curlys and Lauries and Tonys and Marias. In drama as in life, crapshooters and Salvation Army workers and street-gang members don't celebrate falling in love by bursting into song. In musicals they do, and when the songs are as seductive as the best of those in *Guys and Dolls*, we happily buy into the make-believe—an opportunity not offered us by even the greatest recorded performances of Sinatra and Fitzgerald, who always are exactly who they are.

NATURALLY, "I've Never Been in Love Before" was omitted from Joseph L. Mankiewicz's 1955 movie of *Guys and Dolls*. So was "My Time of Day," the ode to nightlife that in Loesser's original score amounted to the introductory verse of "I've

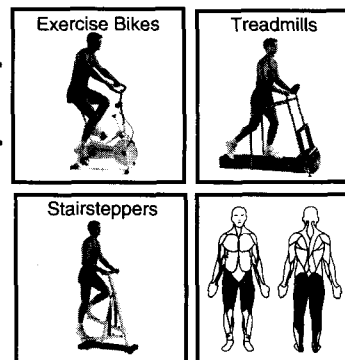
Never Been in Love Before," and whose wide intervals were presumably too great a stretch for Marlon Brando, Mankiewicz's improbable Sky. But although hardly equal to the numbers he actually does warble, including "Luck Be a Lady" and the rapturous "I'll Know," Brando manages to use his shy whisper of a singing voice to externalize the flamboyant Sky's hidden softness and decency, the qualities that prevent him from taking advantage of Sister Sarah after getting her soused on rum in Havana. Legend has it that Brando, once he found himself in a position to demand script approval, would insist on being shot or beaten up at least once in every movie, in order to enlist sympathy for his character. You can't help feeling sympathy for his Sky, whose wavering intonation and puzzled relationship to the beat are the aural equivalents of a bloodied nose or an arm in a sling.

There has never been an entirely satisfying stage production of *Guys and Dolls* either—at least not in terms of the singers chosen to interpret Loesser's songs. In saying this, I realize that many will think me guilty of heresy. The album of the original 1950 production (now available on an MCA compact disc, MCAD-10301) is one of the most cherished artifacts of the early original-cast-album era. Robert Alda and Isabel Bigley as the romantic leads, and Sam Levene and Vivian Blaine as their comic counterparts, the floating-craps-game operator Nathan Detroit and the showgirl Miss Adelaide, are generally believed to have set a standard to which the cast of the current Broadway revival can only aspire. But this lofty reputation strikes me as borrowed magic, a side effect of the realization that the unapologetic contemporary-American accent of Loesser's melodies and lyrics represented a real breakthrough for Broadway.

From the vantage point of four decades later, Bigley is nondescript, Blaine a little brassier than her role calls for, Alda close to tone-deaf, and Levene phlegmatic in the laryngological as well as the dispositional sense. The only performer from the original cast who gives a performance that you sense in your bones couldn't possibly be bettered is the inimitable Stubby Kaye, as Nicely-Nicely Johnson, the tinhorn so good at conning himself that his nag can't lose that he also cons himself into

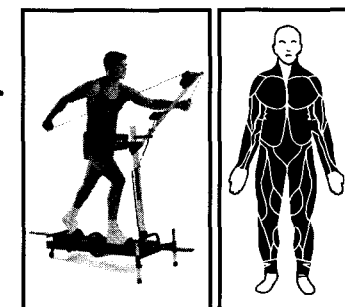
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believing his dream about changing his wicked ways.

This, of course, is in "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat," the biggest of the show's production numbers, delivered by Kaye in a voice as stout and unmannered as Jimmy Rushing's and preserved in the film version. (Seemingly wider than he is tall and just made for Cinemascope, Kaye steals the movie; you can see the look of preternatural bliss on his face.) There's never going to be a comparable Nicely-Nicely, but on the cast album of the new *Guys and Dolls*, Walter Bobbie sets the nerves on edge by whining "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat" instead of singing it. I wish that the role had been given to J. K. Simmons, who joins Bobbie on "Fugue for Tinhorns" and the title song, and whose voice is similar to Kaye's in amplitude and timbre.

In the new cast Faith Prince and Josie de Guzman score especially high marks as Adelaide and Sarah, and Edward Strauss's orchestrations bring out a jazzy shimmer in Loesser's melodies that wasn't always apparent on the first cast album. Prince's skills as both singer and actress are such that in "Adelaide's Lament" what comes across is the wit of Loesser's lyrics about the perils of a girl's remaining single, instead of just the character's Brooklynese. The challenge in singing the role of Sarah is that it demands two completely different voices—a prim and yearning soprano for "I'll Know," and a horny, openly amazed-at-itself slur for "If I Were a Bell." De Guzman is believable at both, perhaps because she has the wisdom not to overdo either.

As his gambler namesake, Nathan Lane relies more on comic timing than on vocal prowess, which is okay, because no role originated by Sam Levene requires much in the way of vocal prowess. The role of Sky does, and Peter Gallagher isn't always up to the task, although his voice does curve handsomely under De Guzman's on their two love duets. A studious actor for whom singing is an acquired skill, much as it was for Alda and Brando, Gallagher isn't bad, just unsure of himself. He's a Sky lacking in self-confidence, and this cannot be. The RCA CD includes a few of the spoken interludes leading up to the songs, and Gallagher frequently seems reluctant to

speak in his natural voice, much less to sing in it. Just when he seems to be doing fine, he becomes the dreaded Gordon MacRae.

ACTORS WHO sing on Broadway are seldom cast for their singing abilities alone. They also have to look the part, and it helps if they're able to move and to deliver their spoken lines with some amount of grace. In a way, cast albums are no more than one-dimensional souvenirs of the shows they allegedly preserve. The exceptions are those albums on which a cast was assembled for the sole purpose of recording. These are usually not just revivals but archaeological digs that place shows in *status quo ante* by restoring songs discarded at one point or another during a show's early run. The masterpiece of the genre is John McGlinn's 1988 restoration of Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II's *Show Boat*—a more "theatrical" experience than most stage productions of the show, largely owing to the chill provided by Teresa Stratas as the mulatto Julie and McGlinn's retrieval of an ominous, quasi-gospel number called "Mis'ry's Comin' Aroun'."

Not every vintage show benefits from, or even justifies, this archival approach. A case in point is *Lady, Be Good!* (Elektra Nonesuch 79308), the latest in Tommy Krasker's series of Gershwin restorations, following *Strike Up the Band* and *Girl Crazy*. As presented on Broadway in 1924, *Lady, Be Good!*—the Gershwins' first smash—was less an organic whole than a series of star turns for a variety of the period's top performers, including Fred and Adele Astaire and the vaudevillian Ukulele Ike. In addition to the title song, the score introduced "Fascinating Rhythm" and "The Half of It, Dearie, Blues." It also included a number of period novelties there seems little point in recording now, especially with performers lacking the charisma of the Astaires. (An actual stage revival, with the songs complementing the action and vice versa, might be another matter.) On "Fascinating Rhythm" and "Little Jazz Bird" the singer and guitarist John Pizzarelli, this production's Ukulele Ike, exudes a carefree swing that six decades of jazz interpretations of the Gershwin brothers have conditioned us to expect from all performers of their songs. But Lara Teeter and

Ann Morrison, though faithful to the composer's intentions, sound hopelessly dated in the roles originated by the Astaires.

There have been studio recordings of *Guys and Dolls*, but nothing like today's meticulous, carefully cast restorations. My own dream cast recording of *Guys and Dolls*, featuring singers past and present, would include Stubby Kaye and Faith Prince. My choice for Nathan would be none other than Frank Loesser, whose singing voice resembled Gene Kelly's in its regular-guy-ness, although his phrasing was far more relaxed than Kelly's—like a jazz instrumentalist singing a few choruses for his own enjoyment. I base this judgment on *An Evening With Frank Loesser* (a CD, DRG 5169), a collection of recently discovered "demonstration" versions of songs from *Guys and Dolls*, *The Most Happy Fella*, and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. No one has delivered Nathan's lines (from "Sue Me") "All right already, I'm just a no-goodnik . . . it's true / So nu?" with as much charm as the composer himself.

Frank Sinatra as he was in 1955 is the only man fit to play Sky, his credibility as a high roller enhanced by his long-alleged links to organized crime. Wasted in the role of Nathan in the movie of that year, presumably because Hollywood still considered him too much of a toothpick to woo a leading lady, Sinatra got his revenge eight years later as first among equals on an album of songs from *Guys and Dolls* by the Reprise Repertory Theatre (actually an ad hoc gathering of Rat Packers and their fellow travelers). This *Guys and Dolls*—reissued last year on CD (Reprise 45014)—is truly a crapshoot. Sinatra sings "I've Never Been in Love Before" so beautifully that you're willing to forget that the song is supposed to be a duet, and his bravura "Luck Be a Lady" (with Billy May's punchy high brass taking the place of a chorus of craphshooters urging Sky to "Roll the dice!") has since become one of his trademark numbers. It's such a definitive performance that many of us now think of the song as Sinatra's, not Broadway's. Sammy Davis Jr.'s "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat" is brash fun, and Jo Stafford's "I'll Know" is just about perfect (harmonizing with the orchestra where Sarah usually does with Sky, she interpolates the male response into the bridge). On the other hand, the

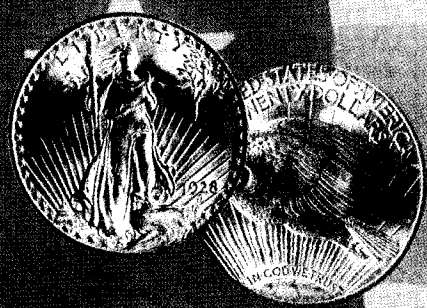
McGuire Sisters' "A Bushel and a Peck" is sheer torture, as are Debbie Reynolds and Allan Sherman as Adelaide and Nathan.

If the excesses of the Reprise album teach us anything, it's that Loesser's songs are so closely keyed to the tumult surrounding them on stage (and are so revealing of the eccentricities of the characters who sing them) that a studio-only *Guys and Dolls* featuring singers who have never tried on those Salvation Army bonnets and flowered ties inevitably leaves us feeling cheated.

BROADWAY HAS changed so much in the past two decades that the name most people under the age of thirty associate with it is probably that of Andrew Lloyd Webber, whose vulgar spectacles at least kept Broadway alive through some lean times (that's about all that can be said in their favor). Along with British imports, the other new trend on Broadway in the past twenty years has been the "jazz" musical, usually featuring an all-black cast and built around the songs of an iconic performer of another era: Fats Waller in the case of *Ain't Misbehavin'*, and Duke Ellington in that of *Sophisticated Ladies*.

Two such shows had their Broadway premieres in 1992, and there is a cast album for each. Essentially a revue, *Five Guys Named Moe* (Columbia CK-52999) celebrates—or lamely attempts to—the influence of Louis Jordan, a singer and alto saxophonist whose hit records of the 1940s, which included "Is You Is or Is You Ain't (Ma' Baby)" and "Choo Choo Ch' Boogie," hilariously translated country homilies into urban jive and established the ground rules for rhythm-and-blues in the process. Jordan's songs are as evocative of their period as the zoot suit, but they also represent superior musicianship of a kind that is timeless. You'd never guess this from *Five Guys Named Moe*. The title song was written for Jordan by Larry Wynn, who explains in the liner notes that the phrase "five guys named Moe" popped into his head one day as he was trying to remember the names of the lesser-known musicians on a recording date with Billie Holiday, Roy Eldridge, Teddy Wilson, Don Redman, and Georgie Auld. The five nonentities in this Broadway revue might as well all be named Moe, so indistinguishable are they in their cheery

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oversell of two dozen of Jordan's slyest numbers.

Jelly's Last Jam (Mercury 314 510 846) is something else altogether: more ambitious and more effective as theater, but meanspirited and manipulative in its portrayal of its subject. Written and directed by George C. Wolfe and starring Gregory Hines, the show tells the story of Jelly Roll Morton, the New Orleans "Creole of color" who claimed to have invented jazz—and whose tangos, stomps, and variations on ragtime and the blues really did originate jazz composition.

Unfolding mostly in flashbacks after having deposited Morton and his immortal soul in the Jungle Inn, "a low-down club somewhere 'tween Heaven and Hell," *Jelly's Last Jam* is simultaneously the most lavish of Broadway's black musicals and a critique of the genre. It breaks new ground in acknowledging the social disorder its subject's music evolved from, and in incorporating lighting and staging techniques associated with the shoestring avant-garde into what is essentially a mainstream, big-bucks extravaganza. But it puts Morton on trial for being a light-skinned opportunist who formulated his music from the joys and misfortunes of people darker and lower on the social ladder than himself, whom he persisted in thinking of himself as superior to. Some of the charges might be true; but you get the feeling that Wolfe, by changing the rules on Morton and questioning whether he was "black" enough by today's standards, is using Morton to work out his own conflicts regarding color and class. The most unforgivable part of it is that *Jelly's Last Jam* stacks the cards against Morton by never letting us hear his music in anything resembling its original form. The titles of his pieces have been changed to conform to Susan Birkenhead's ill-fitting lyrics, and Luther Henderson's unsympathetic arrangements reduce Morton's idiosyncratic rhythms to generic 1920s doo-wacka-doo.

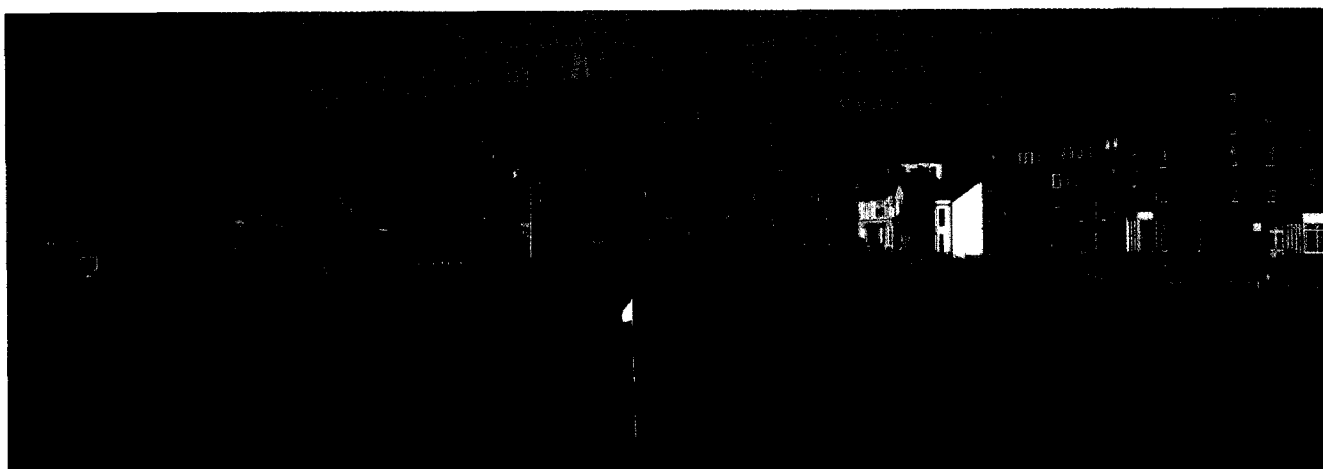
JAZZ ONCE derived much of its repertoire from Broadway, but, owing as much to changes within jazz as to a decline in the quality of Broadway songwriting, the process has been reversed, with such shows as *Jelly's Last Jam* and *Five Guys Named Moe* the unhappy result. In addition to the plea-

tures it affords in its own right, the current revival of *Guys and Dolls* is a reminder of a time when Broadway was not only more robust but also more autonomous.

The alto and soprano saxophonist Michael Hashim's album *Guys and Dolls* (Stash ST-CD 558) is likewise a reminder of a time, this one approximately three decades past, when "jazz version of" LPs used to follow on the heels of the original-cast recordings of most hit shows. Albums like Hashim's used to be plentiful: in the jazz section of any good used-record store you're likely to find Teddy Wilson's *Gypsy*, Cannonball Adderley's *Fiddler on the Roof*, even (with some luck) Eddie Costa's *Guys and Dolls Like Vibes*. The target audience for such albums was only marginally interested in jazz but was willing to make an effort if the musicians obliged by playing familiar songs of recent vintage. This secondary market for jazz no longer exists, and such albums have disappeared along with it.

All of which might make Hashim's *Guys and Dolls* merely an irresistible anachronism. But it's also vital contemporary jazz. Thanks to their challenging harmonic structures, Loesser's songs lend themselves as readily to chordal improvisation as they do to singing. Hashim and his sidemen—the drummer Kenny Washington, the bassist Peter Washington, and the pianist Michael LeDonne, who worked out most of the arrangements—do justice to the melodies even while taking such liberties with them as voicing "I'll Know" slightly sharp, slowing "Fugue for Tinhorns" to a saunter, and putting the drummer's brushstrokes up front on "If I Were a Bell." "My Time of Day" becomes a lonely blues wail, and "Marry the Man Today" is transformed into a semi-exotic march, replete with Phil Woods-like puckers at the end of Hashim's lengthier and more excited phrases. In exercising their own improvisational flair, these four musicians also demonstrate the amenability of Loesser's songs to such novel approaches. An improviser could hardly ask for better material.

They don't make albums like this anymore, in part because they don't stage shows like *Guys and Dolls* anymore. But did they ever? *Guys and Dolls* isn't just a Broadway musical. It's a down-to-earth platonic ideal of what a Broadway musical should be. □



A Scottish Pilgrimage

Touring the renowned golf courses in the homeland of the sport

by David Owen

FOR THE American traveler, lugging a golf bag through a Scottish airport is—or ought to be—embarrassing, like carrying an elephant gun down the streets of Nairobi. So many Americans make pilgrimages to the ancestral home of golf that it is possible for a visitor to wonder at the height of the Scottish golfing season whether anyone is left on the courses at home. It is unsettling to walk into the clubhouse at a British Open golf course and find that every seat is being sat in by an American, and that the display of beverages behind the bar includes bottles of Jack Daniel's and Miller Lite.

On the other hand, it may turn out (as it did for me, during a recent golfing adventure in Scotland) that all those Americans in the clubhouse are actually only Canadians, and that nearly all of them are drinking domestic ale, and that the golf course itself is virtually empty. It may even turn out, as it also did for me, that Scotland is a great place to visit even when you're not playing golf, and that an overpopulation of loudmouthed, know-it-all non-Scots cannot diminish the pleasure that yet another loudmouthed, know-it-all non-Scot will take in driving through

the countryside, staying in nice hotels, and looking at interesting stuff.

My week-long trip began in Glasgow, to which I flew nonstop from New York. In a rented car I drove first to the west coast, then to the hills of central Scotland, then to the east coast, then to the far north, and finally back to Glasgow. Although I put less than 700 miles on my car, my route covered a large portion of the country and took me to eight wonderful golf courses. There is nothing intimidating about a Scottish mileage chart. In less time than it takes some Americans to commute to work, you can drive practically from one end of the country to the other. This fact is underappreciated by the locals, who, like most island dwellers, have a compressed sense of geographic scale. When I casually mentioned to a waitress in a pub near Perth that I was going to drive that afternoon to Dornoch—a distance of less than 200 miles—she looked at me as incredulously as if I had told her that I was planning to paddle a canoe to the moon.

Above, the clubhouse (at left) and eighteenth fairway of St. Andrews's Old Course, golf's holy of holies

MY FIRST destination was Turnberry, a little more than an hour southwest of Glasgow. Once I had broken free of that grimy city's gravitational pull, the drive was beautiful. I saw rolling hills, sheep-dotted pastures, medieval ruins, wind-twisted trees, a sign pointing to the birthplace of Robert Burns, and stone walls so long they must have taken centuries to build. Arriving in Turnberry itself, I saw clumps of red-roofed cottages and, on the hill to the left, a hotel grand enough to be the palace of the king of the world. Turnberry's two excellent golf courses—the Ailsa, where the British Open will be played in 1994, and the slightly less distinguished Arran—are to the right, between the road and the Firth of Clyde. If the weather is reasonably clear, you can look out over the water to a stark granite thumb called Ailsa Craig, which at one time provided the world's supply of curling stones.

Turnberry is Britain's original golf resort. The hotel and the courses were built in the early years of this century by the Glasgow & South Western Railway, which presumably hoped to lure train passengers to Ayrshire. The



courses were turned into airfields during both world wars and then brilliantly restored in the early fifties. Today the entire complex is owned by a Japanese mega-corporation, and the infusion of yen has been a boon. My room was beautifully furnished. From its ample window I could look down a broad lawn to the treeless, undulating land on which the golf courses are laid out. I could see a spare white lighthouse and the remains of the fourteenth-century

castle of Robert the Bruce. At cocktail time a bagpiper strolled back and forth on the terrace below my window—a hokey touch to which I found I was susceptible. If I had wanted to, I could have visited the hotel's reputedly stupendous sports center, just over the hill. After a good dinner I returned to my room to find a starched white cloth slightly larger than a handkerchief laid on the floor beside my turned-down bed, to protect my freshly de-slipped

feet from any unsavory contact with the carpet.

I had come to Scotland expecting its golf courses to be as clogged as their American cousins, but was delighted to discover many of them otherwise. Almost no one was playing the Ailsa course when I arrived, at around eleven o'clock on a Monday morning in early June. During the half hour it took me to eat lunch in the clubhouse, no one set out from the first tee. I hired a cad-

At left, the King's Course at Gleneagles, a favorite among Americans even if golf carts aren't allowed

dy, played eighteen holes, had a bowl of soup in the bar, played eighteen more holes, took a shower, and still had an hour to kill before dinner. If I had wanted to, I could have played a third round before bed, because in June the sun doesn't set on Scotland until ten or so.

From Turnberry, I headed northeast to Gleneagles, a drive of just over two hours. Completed in the twenties, Gleneagles is Scotland's other famous golf resort. The hotel, its grounds, and the three golf courses (including a new one, designed by Jack Nicklaus, that is scheduled to open this spring) are breathtaking. The championship course—called the King's Course—falls short of Turnberry in the estimation of professionals, but it is still wonderful, and it is enough of a test to be the home of the Scottish Open. It is also a favorite among Americans, because, like many of the courses back home, it has trees, big hills, and a couple of ponds. As at Turnberry, I had the place virtually to myself, and I played fifty-four holes before checking into my room. I used the same gratifyingly colorful caddy for all three rounds, and I found that I enjoyed placing my fate entirely in his hands. Midway through my second round we joined two local members, both retired, who told me that they had moved to the area for the sole purpose of playing golf at Gleneagles every day of the year for the rest of their lives. On one hole I hit an uncharacteristically terrific drive and followed it with a towering approach shot that miraculously stuck right next to the pin. One of my playing partners asked whether I had just hit a seven-iron or an eight-iron, and my caddy, with solemn pride, said, "We hit a wedge."

I found the accommodations at Gleneagles to be somewhat less wonderful than those at Turnberry. My room was a little ragged, and the bed was on the dinky side. Still, Gleneagles compatibly occupies one of the loveliest spots on earth, and the views both from and of the golf course are stunning. There are farms, rolling pastures, and woods in all directions, and mountains to the east. During my visit the enormous rhododendrons and ubiquitous gorse were in explosive bloom. As I played my second round, the course was intermittently bathed in an eerie yellow light,

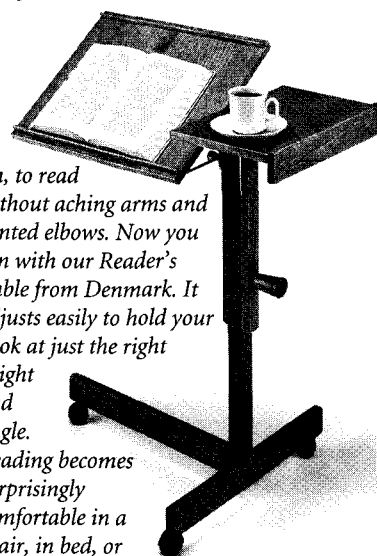
and I watched a procession of rain clouds sweep down a valley in the mountains. My caddy pointed out an enormous heron, a curlew guarding a clutch of speckled eggs, a duck sitting on a nest, a dozen or so stoats, and a tiny roe deer foraging with two Chihuahua-sized fawns.

The next morning I drove to the east coast and St. Andrews. My route took me through the same valley down which I had watched storm clouds glide the day before. The narrow road wound past ancient farms and a couple of cozy-looking inns. There was no other traffic, and for fifteen minutes I drove unthinkingly on the American side of the road.

St. Andrews is generally considered to be golf's birthplace, where the game more or less as we know it was invented roughly 600 years ago. The life of the city still orbits around golf. The principal local shrine is the Old Course, which is far and away the holiest piece of golfing turf in the world. Still, the Old Course is famously disappointing to first-time visitors. Arriving in St. Andrews for the 1946 British Open, Sam Snead glimpsed it from the window of his train and thought it was a farm. "It looks like that might have been an old golf course that's gone to seed," he remarked to a traveling companion. But the subtleties of the course quickly convert those who play it thoughtfully (including Snead, who won the 1946 Open), and its genetic imprint is evident in every golf course on earth.

Like virtually all the great British golf courses, the Old Course is open to the public. To secure a reserved tee time, an American traveler must usually write many months in advance, but it is also possible simply to show up at the first tee and wait to be tacked onto an existing twosome or threesome. I arrived at the starter's booth at eight-thirty and was sent out an hour and a half later with three other waiting singles. The course was crowded, but play was significantly faster than it would have been on a comparably busy American course. Paradoxically, one reason the play moved swiftly was that all the golfers were walking. On the Old Course, as on almost all Scottish courses, there are no motorized golf carts. (On the Ailsa course not even pullcarts are allowed.) Four golfers on foot can play faster than four golfers driving two carts in aimless, infuriating circles. Furthermore, because they walk, Scottish golfers look less

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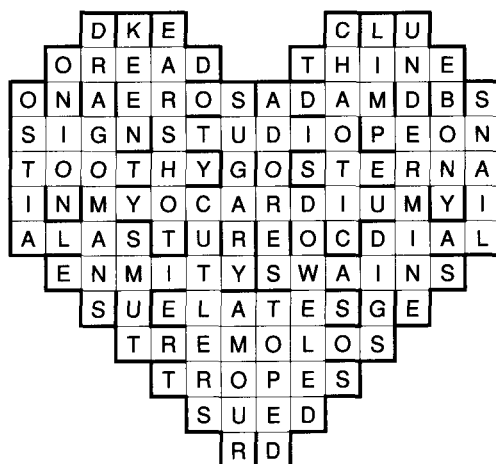
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like candidates for coronary bypasses, and their golf courses look less like interstate highways. The difference is so striking that I could scarcely help feeling ashamed.

THE LAST major stop on my tour was Dornoch, which is well on the way to the Arctic Circle—about an hour north of Inverness. The Royal Dornoch Golf Club is on nearly every list of the world's greatest courses, although it is far enough out of the way to be omitted from most tourists' itineraries. The course is reminiscent of Turnberry, with quirky, meandering fairways and a number of holes that sweep dramatically along the sea. I stayed at the Royal Golf Hotel, which is situated on a hill above the course, little more than a chip shot from the first tee. In a final haze of golfing euphoria, I played a round before lunch, a round before dinner, and a round before bed. I was joined for my final round by a young electrician from Inverness who had one of the prettiest golf swings I have ever seen. He told me that he loved Royal Dornoch and that he didn't really mind paying its membership fee, which, he said, had recently been raised to the equivalent of about \$300 a year.

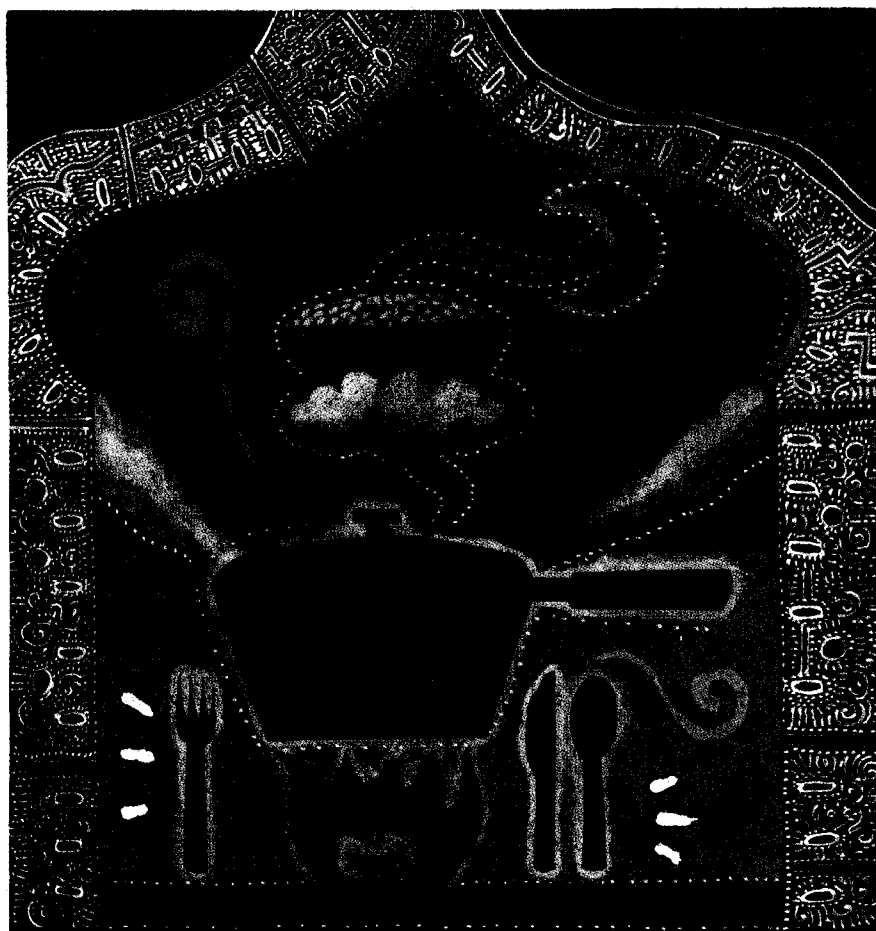
One of the best things about my trip was that it was only a few times as expensive as staying at home. The total tab—including airfare, rental car, nice hotels, fifteen rounds' worth of greens fees, souvenirs for my wife, my children, and myself, and lots of dreadful British food—came to slightly less than \$2,800. (I could have knocked a few hundred dollars off the total by staying in bed-and-breakfasts and playing a more reasonable amount of golf.) Best of all, I didn't have to make any of my own reservations. My entire trip was arranged by Jerry Quinlan, of Celtic Golf Tours (1062 Pennsylvania Ave., Cape May, New Jersey 08204; 800-535-6148). Quinlan puts together group golfing expeditions to Scotland and Ireland, and he also arranges custom trips for individuals. I told him where I wanted to go and when I wanted to leave, and a couple of weeks later he sent me a booklet of vouchers with my tee times (except at courses that don't give times to single players) and the names of my hotels neatly filled in. I'm tempted to ask Quinlan to organize the rest of my life. At the very least, I intend to ask him to send me to Scotland again. □

Answers to the February Puzzler



"CRYPTIC VALENTINE"

Across answers are given in the order of their clues' occurrence in the verse. Across. MY-O-CARD-I(U)M; O-READ; EROS (rev.); (r)ELATES; ENMITY (anag.); TREMOLOS (anag.); A-DAM (*mad* rev.); PE(O)N; SUED (anag.); ALA-S; THINE (hidden); STERN-A; STUD-I-O; TOO-THY; DIAL (rev.); SIG(N); SWA(D)NS; T(R)OPES (*r* + anag.) Down. 1. DRAG-OMAN'S 2. KE(E)N 3. EARS-HOT 4. CH(A-OT)IC 5. L(IM)P 6. UNDERMINE (anag.) 7. ON(I)-ON 8. E-BONY 9. OSTI-A (anag. + *a*) 10. SU-GARY (*US* rev.) 11. AD-ORE-S 12. S-NAIL 13. CUTLERS (anag.) 14. DO-WE-LED 15. S-MUT(t) 16. DIGS (double def.) 17. A-M-OUR 18. TOPED (rev.)



Long and Fluffy

Inexplicably, we pay little heed to aromatic rice, some of the best there is

by Corby Kummer

I HAVE SPENT much of my life avoiding rice. I always assumed this to be a holdover from my childhood, when I was served rice seemingly every night by a mother whose culinary education was indelibly influenced by a Japanese woman who lived with us. My mother adopted the habit of offering as a condiment dried bonito flakes—bark-colored, almost transparent shavings of salted, dried tuna with a smell (a *strong* smell) of fermented fish. She kept these flakes in a handsome peanut-brittle tin. My brother, sister, or I, hoping to find cookies on pantry forays, would open

the tin, always forgetting what was in it. I lost any appetite for rice.

I rediscovered rice as an adult on visits to Italy, the only major rice producer in Europe. Arborio rice, the kind that grows in the Po Valley and gave rise to the wonderful dish risotto, has a tiny opaque white pearl on the inside that remains al dente, and starch on the outside that the grains release during cooking, making a creamy sauce.

I did not venture beyond risotto until recently, when I read two books: *Hoppin' John's Lowcountry Cooking*, by John Martin Taylor, a South Carolinian by

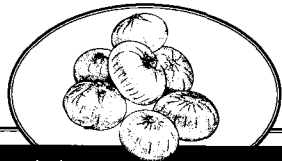
birth and a historian who adapts old dishes to modern cooks, and *The Carolina Rice Kitchen*, a new history of rice in South Carolina, by the ever disputatious and influential historian Karen Hess. Much of Hess's book chronicles how South Carolina's once-mighty rice industry, centered in the wetlands of the coastal "low country," made Carolina Gold the most prestigious variety the world over. The book shows that slaves taught their masters how to cook "beautifully boiled rice," since the English and for that matter the French were ever "dismal rice cooks."

The low-country rice dish par excellence is "pilau," as the dish more commonly known as pilaf is called in Persian. The technique, like the dish, originated in Persia, according to Hess; conquering Arabs adopted it and brought it to Africa. Its chief requirement is that every grain of rice remain separate. The rice is simmered until the liquid is fully absorbed; usually there are bits of meat or fish and vegetables as well.

Pilau is a grand treat, as Hess would say in an indulgent moment, and it is worth knowing. It won't in my estimation displace risotto, whose uniquely creamy texture and crunch I love, but pilau is an easier dish (no constant stirring for twenty-five minutes) and in many ways a more useful one. It can wait for guests, as risotto can't, and can be served at room temperature or reheated, as risotto also can't. And it keeps getting better, because the rice continues to absorb liquid and flavor as it cools.

The success of a pilau relies more on the kind of rice that goes into it than on the care the cook takes to keep it fluffy. Any good long-grain rice reliably stays separate after being cooked, and when it is as good as many of the aromatic strains now cultivated in America, pilau is well worth making. I recently gathered a number of aromatic rices grown here and in India, the most famous of which is Basmati, and tested them against the plain rice I had grown up leaving on the plate. I discovered that the problem wasn't the bonito flakes. It was the rice.

PERFECT RICE is usually defined in this country as fluffy rice. Whether rice is fluffy or sticky depends on the proportion of amylose, one of the two kinds of starch granules in rice, to amylopectin, which more readily forms



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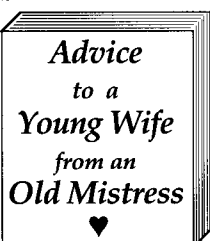
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a gel with water. Short-grain rice, whose grains are between one and two times as long as they are wide, is grown not only in Italy but also in Asia, especially Japan. It is the highest in amylopectin and the stickiest—think of the adhesive rice in sushi rolls. Medium-grain rice, whose grains are between two and three times as long as they are wide, is slightly higher in amylose and thus is a bit less sticky. In Spain and Portugal medium-grain Valencia rice is traditional for the fish stew paella, which is named for the wide flat pan in which it is cooked. The abundance of free starch also makes short-grain and medium-grain rice ideal for rice pudding, to my mind the finest rice dish after risotto. The United States grows both short- and medium-grain rice, but most of it is used in breakfast cereals and the like.

Long-grain rice, whose grains are four to five times as long as they are wide, is the highest in amylose and thus the fluffiest. Its low amount of free starch is the reason long-grain rice does not make a good risotto, whatever some convenience-minded cooks may tell you, and isn't great for pudding, either.

Uncle Ben's, one of very few national brands of rice, has undergone parboiling, a process in which the whole grain of rice is steamed under pressure before it is hulled. ("Converted" is a trademarked name of Uncle Ben's for parboiled rice.) You can always tell uncooked parboiled rice by its translucent kernels; rice that has not been parboiled has opaque grains. Despite the usual meaning of "parboil," the rice is not precooked. In fact, it takes a bit longer to cook. Nonetheless, the process offers advantages. The grains become harder, meaning there will be less broken rice, which brings the miller a lower price.

The stabilization of the exterior starch which occurs during parboiling is a boon to timid cooks, who needn't worry about finding the secret of fluffy rice. As long as the rice is not overcooked, the grains will stay separate—separate and dull. They have virtually no flavor of their own, an indeterminate texture that is neither mushy nor firm, and a sweetish overtone reminiscent of grade-school paste.

America does produce delicious rice today. The world-renowned strains of Carolina Gold long-grain rice fell out of use long ago, as the U.S. industry moved to states where the terrain favored mechanical planting and harvesting (the

leading rice-growing states are Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, and California). But now we have the Della strain, a cross between Basmati, a word that in India means "queen of fragrance," and American long-grain rice. Varieties of the Della strain are sold under various names, such as Texmati, Delta Rose, Konriko Wild Pecan Rice, and Cajun Country Popcorn Rice.

"Popcorn" describes the smell of 2-acetyl 1-pyrroline, which is found in popcorn, various nuts, and all rices; the compound appears in especially strong concentrations in Basmati rice and related strains. Good aromatic rice is so nutty that when it is boiled alone it seems roasted and salted—as if it came from a package of pre-seasoned rice.

Even if the strains are very similar or identical, rice varies greatly by year and region. Indians say that to be good, Basmati should age at least two years to develop its flavor. According to Bill Webb, a research chemist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Beaumont, Texas, aging will cure a rice and slow down enzymatic activity so that it will be especially fluffy when cooked, and might enhance the flavor of aromatic rice if it is stored in dry, cool conditions.

Indian Basmati is long and tubular, and prized for its length. Look for Dehraduni, the finest strain of Basmati, to see how elegant and bright white rice can look. The shape of cooked Della rice is oddly blocklike, and although the grains do elongate as they cook, they swell at the same time, and the ends seem to split. Pure Indian Basmati strains, with their svelte grains and tapered ends, have not been adapted to the U.S. terrain and climate, although research botanists say that one will be grown here within a few years. No matter. American aromatic rices can equal Basmati in flavor. During my recent sampling I especially liked Delta Rose and Konriko Wild Pecan; Texmati and its relatives can be fine too. Aromatic rice is the only long-grain rice I recommend keeping in your kitchen.

LONG-GRAIN rice cooks faster than you think: faster than the box says, and faster than many recipes—which assume the rice is parboiled—say. Also, there is more than one cooking method. The box will give the total-absorption method. This calls for the rice to be simmered with just enough water to soften it—usually two

parts water to one part dry rice—and then left to rest over a very low flame or simply in a warm place for a final steaming. Hess calls this the Chinese method, and says that it evolved as a way to conserve fuel, by heating only as much liquid as was essential and letting time and a tight lid do the rest.

I find that I prefer the total-absorption method, because it best preserves whatever flavor the rice has, and it also retains all water-soluble nutrients. It takes some cooking by instinct, though. You have to guess exactly how much liquid the rice will absorb, which is more of an art than package instructions imply. Too much, and you'll overcook the rice while waiting for it to absorb all the liquid. Too little, and the rice will be hard and stick to the bottom of the pan. (*Chello*, a Persian way of cooking rice echoed in other cuisines, involves the creation of a crust of browned rice, usually butter-soaked, called a *tah-dig*, the rice within is moist and separate. Discerning eaters insist on a piece of the crust, although the understandable desire to eat only the crust is frowned on.) Older rice and parboiled rice require a bit more than twice as much water as rice, whereas other rice usually requires a bit less. Also, you have to adjust for the shape of the pot, even though it is covered. More water will evaporate during cooking in a wide shallow pot than in a narrow one.

All this guessing makes for a certain amount of insecurity in trying to cook perfect fluffy rice. But at the end you can make up for any initial miscalculations. For one cup of non-parboiled rice—which will yield three cups of cooked rice, or four to six servings—bring one and three quarters cups of water to a boil; add a teaspoon of salt to the water. (Sensitive as I am to oversalting, salt in the water makes an important and, I think, good difference to the taste of the rice, as it does to the taste of pasta.) Because almost all American long-grain rice has been given a final bath of dissolved iron, thiamine (vitamin B₁), and niacin, cooks are instructed never to wash it before cooking or rinse it afterward, so as not to lose the added nutrients. Imported rice, however, has generally not been enriched, and should be rinsed several times before cooking, to eliminate any debris.

Pour in the rice and stir to distribute it evenly. Bring back to a boil, reduce the heat to a low simmer, and cover the

pan tightly. The common injunctions not to peek or stir the rice again are meant to maintain a steady simmer and to avoid disturbing the even absorption of water, but they are not ironclad. Set a timer for twelve minutes.

When the timer goes off, turn off the heat and either leave the pot to sit for at least five minutes or set the pot in a warm oven. During this final steaming the water diffuses more evenly throughout the kernel, and so the finished rice will be more stable if you want to toss it with other ingredients or reheat it. Nineteenth-century cookbooks call for rice to be “soaked”—left to sit in a warm place or over a low flame after boiling—for an hour, after which it will be perfectly fluffy, but in fact five or ten minutes suffices.

This is where you can remedy any imperfections. Look at the rice before you set it to rest. If it seems dry, sprinkle a tablespoon or two of water over it; if it seems liquidy, let it rest for five or ten minutes and then taste it, and if it is done, pour out the rest of the liquid so that the rice will not become too soft. All rice will continue to absorb any liquid available; short-grain rice has a larger and longer-term capacity to absorb liquid than long-grain rice does. Cooked rice can sit for thirty to sixty minutes without drying out. Toss it with a cooking fork before serving; this will separate any grains that have consolidated, distribute any remaining liquid, and make the rice look fluffy.

OTHER COOKING methods are less tricky than the total-absorption method, though the results are not as tasty. The excess-water, or “Indian,” method, still in use in the kitchens of many professional chefs, is to boil rice in large quantities of water, like pasta, and then to drain most of the water and let the rice sit, covered, while the rest of dinner cooks. This was the standard method in South Carolina, as it had been in Africa.

I tried a straight boil and was surprised at how fast and reliable a method it is, especially for Basmati. I followed Julie Sahni's directions in *Classic Indian Cooking* for plain boiled Basmati, pre-soaking the rice for a half hour and then boiling it in abundant water for just two minutes after the water came back to the boil, draining and quickly rinsing it, and returning the rice to the pot and setting it, tightly covered, to rest over

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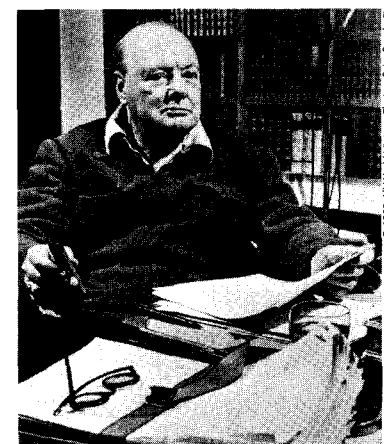
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the lowest possible heat for ten minutes. The rice was perfectly separate, each grain tumbling off the serving spoon, and it stayed that way both after it cooled and with several reheatings. Soaking and boiling American aromatic rices was not an improvement over the total-absorption method, though; both kinds I tried required seven to ten minutes of boiling before they were cooked through, and the grains were not as dramatically separate as those of Basmati. The flavor of all the boiled rices seemed blander.

Brown rice shows the method to its greatest advantage, although the discarded cooking water might contain some nutrients. I confess that I don't like brown rice. I usually like nutty, chewy grains, but brown rice lacks the delicacy and pleasing texture—just slightly hard—of correctly cooked white aromatic rice. Nonetheless, a straight boil lowers the cooking time from the recommended forty or forty-five minutes to fifteen plus a five-minute rest after the rice is drained. Aromatic rice comes in brown versions, too: Fantastic Foods sells imported Indian Basmati rice, brown as well as white; Lundberg Family Farms, in California, markets many varieties of brown rice; and Texmati packages both a brown version of its Della rice and a "Lite Bran" rice, from which part of the bran has been removed.

Cooked rice lasts for several days in the refrigerator. A certain amount of the starch hardens during refrigeration. This is called retrogradation, and can be mostly overcome by adding two tablespoons of liquid to each cup of cold rice before reheating over a low flame or for two minutes in a microwave oven. Although reheated rice will never have what Hess calls the "charm" of freshly cooked rice, it is surprisingly successful. You can also freeze cooked rice as soon as it cools, in plastic bags containing as much as you need for one meal.

I did not have consistent luck cooking rice in the microwave oven. The USA Rice Council's basic instructions work: at high power, cook one cup of non-par-boiled long-grain white rice in two cups water in a deep two- or three-quart dish, tightly covered; finish cooking at medium power fifteen more minutes (ten will do). Once you change quantities of rice or the dish size, though, getting the amount of water right is tricky, and the method doesn't save time anyway.

For a simple variation on boiled rice, try *chello*. After boiling one cup of rice for ten minutes, drain and rinse it and return it to a pan in which you have warmed three or four tablespoons of butter or oil; the more abundant the fat, the crisper and thicker the *tah-dig*. The rice should be at least an inch deep for the proper contrast between crust and fluffy rice—"golden brown on the outside but with the rice inside so perfect that it drops to pieces in snow-white grains the moment the golden skin is broken," in the words of Tom Stobart's *Cook's Encyclopedia*. Cook, tightly covered, for at least a half hour over a medium flame. To unmold the rice in one piece, immerse the pan in cold water for two or three minutes.

CAROLINA pilau (pronounced "pur-lo" or "pi-lo") differs little from some Indian or Persian pilafs except that the rice is not initially browned in fat—a step originally taken to slow the absorption of water into lesser grades of long-grain rice and thus keep them from sticking, and one that is unnecessary with American aromatic rice or imported Basmati. Karen Hess explains in *The Carolina Rice Kitchen* that after the Arab invasion of Persia in the seventh century, pilau followed Islam with Arab settlers and traders: to India with the Moghuls, where it became "pullao"; to Turkey, where it became "pilaf"; and to Africa, where it generally kept its name and where rice was already grown, although it was not of a quality comparable to the high-yielding Persian varieties that the Arabs introduced. In South Carolina the preferred slaves were from Gambia, which, like many countries near the Gold Coast of West Africa, grew rice in quantity.

John Martin Taylor calls shrimp pilau a low-country classic even today, and gives a fine recipe for it in *Hoppin' John's Lowcountry Cooking*. You need first to make shrimp stock, because the flavor of the dish depends on a good stock. This entails the chore of peeling one and a half to two pounds of small or medium shrimp. Using large shrimp as a shortcut won't help—they have much less flavor, and will be less evenly distributed through the pilau. If you can find head-on shrimp, buy them. Peel the shrimp and reserve the meat in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator. Simmer the shells in three quarts of water with a large unpeeled onion cut

in quarters, one large or two small carrots and two celery ribs cut in chunks, and a handful of fresh herbs such as parsley, basil, thyme, or oregano. After forty-five minutes or so strain the stock, pressing on the solids to extract all the liquid, and reserve it. If you can't face peeling shrimp or waiting the forty-five minutes (you can prepare the stock the day before, of course), buy peeled shrimp—they are always expensive, but the smallest, which are the best, will be the cheapest—and resort to low-sodium canned chicken stock or dry cubes of fish bouillon.

In a heavy-bottomed pan that has a tight-fitting cover, sauté four slices of bacon until they are crisp. Set the bacon on paper towels to drain and pour out all but a tablespoon of fat. In it sauté one and a half cups of chopped onion for five to ten minutes, until transparent. Add a cup of peeled, seeded, and chopped tomatoes (about one and a half pounds), either fresh, canned, or—best if you don't have ripe fresh tomatoes—from an aseptic box (Pomi is a widely distributed brand); a quarter teaspoon of hot red pepper flakes; and three tablespoons of chopped parsley leaves. Simmer another five minutes, scraping up the browned bits from the bacon. Add three cups of shrimp stock and a teaspoon of salt if the stock is not salty, and bring to a boil. Stir in two cups of uncooked aromatic rice, cover, and reduce the heat to a low simmer for twelve minutes. While the rice cooks, crumble the bacon. After twelve minutes add the shrimp while fluffing the rice with a large fork. Cover the pan and let it stand on the lowest heat for five minutes or off the heat for five to ten minutes; this brief time will cook the shrimp. Toss with the crumbled bacon and serve.

I tried this recipe with fresh, highly flavored olive oil as a vegetarian alternative to bacon fat, and regret to report that much as I rely on olive oil, the dish was considerably duller. Still, a fragrant rice will make up for a great deal, as will a powerful stock. And remember that pilau is, as Hess puts it, a "culinary conceit": it can be infinitely varied by liquid and garnish. Good places to start for ideas are Taylor's book, any of Julie Sahni's Indian cookbooks, and—for the historically adventurous—Hess's book, which in any case makes good reading. Among the many pleasures of pilau is that, as with so many dishes, real creativity can start with the leftovers. □

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A Gatsby for Today

An enduringly relevant novel of acrid disillusion and resurgent hope

by Sven Birkerts

SINCE IT WAS first published, in 1925, *The Great Gatsby* has established itself as an American classic—more tellingly, as a classic that people actually read, and love. There are some good reasons for this. Fitzgerald's novel is at once formally elegant and piercingly romantic in its expression—a compelling story, but one imbued with the features of legend. It goes off like a flashbulb, freezing a bold array of images on the retina; the fade is delicious, stirring. And then there is the beauty of the writing, the lyric thrill of the sentences. Here is Nick Carraway arriving for his first visit at the home of Daisy and Tom Buchanan:

Their house was even more elaborate than I expected, a cheerful red-and-white Georgian Colonial man-

sion, overlooking the bay. The lawn started at the beach and ran toward the front door for a quarter of a mile, jumping over sun-dials and brick walls and burning gardens—finally when it reached the house drifting up the side in bright vines as though from the momentum of its run. The front was broken by a line of French windows, glowing now with reflected gold and wide open to the warm windy evening, and Tom Buchanan in riding clothes was standing with his legs apart on the front porch.

Kinetic and sportive at first, the description comes to rest in a stationary—heraldic—image of power. This is a prose that has learned a few tricks from the movie camera.

But economy and stylistic grace, even when coupled with a good page-turning

story, are not enough to ensure that a work will rise above seasonal excellence to become a classic. To attain that status a novel—or a work in any genre—must perpetually renew its relevance for audiences. Some books must wait for changing cultural circumstances to give them point; they go in and out of print as the incalculable mood of the general readership dictates. Others, the true classics, survive the vagaries of the marketplace by tapping the stratum of the universal, embodying our essential dreams and conflicts.

Gatsby succeeds on these latter terms. If the novel is not universal in the Shakespearean or Dantean sense, it is nevertheless thoroughly and perfectly American, a pure distillation of our collective experience. But even as it en-

dures as a classic, *Gatsby* is also able to manifest a particular immediacy at certain times. Just now, I would say, it has a special resonance. Indeed, it might well be a kind of breviary for the nineties, not only because it gives us portraits of our recent and current psychological climates, but also because it tells us something about who we are at a point when we very badly need to know.

There is, of course, the obvious relevance—*Gatsby* as a cautionary tale. The Jazz Age of Fitzgerald's 1920s corresponds in so many ways to our recent 1980s: the glitter and public strut of money, and the fiscal and moral leveraging that made it possible; the reckless rush away from the centers of gravity, and the sudden, terrible realization that gravity writes no exceptions—all this is in the book. The wild party and the hangover. We know it well: morning after in America. Like Nick at the outset of the story, we are waking up, slightly stunned, wondering what happened and what it means. Nick says, "When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart."

Gatsby unfolds over the course of a long summer and follows the logic of a dream. One of the marvels of the book is the way in which the narration changes. Though Nick has alerted us in the first few pages to the crashing outcome, we forget. We forget because Nick forgets. His narration becomes fresh and expectant, untainted by hindsight. He is a young man gone east to make his way; he has rented a bungalow next to a fabulous manor house tenanted by a singularly mysterious character.

We first catch sight of our eponymous "hero" when Nick returns home from his dinner with the Buchanans. Nick is out breathing the night air when he realizes that he is not alone: "fifty feet away a figure had emerged from the shadow of my neighbor's mansion and was standing with his hands in his pockets regarding the silver pepper of the stars." He is about to call to the stranger, but when he observes that the man is fixated by a faraway gleam of green light, he desists. And then the man who will be Gatsby is gone.

The first encounter, then, is with the fundamental mystery of Jay Gatsby. And for a time the mystery only grows.

Nick starts seeing more of the Buchanans, and begins to date Daisy's friend, the cool but companionable Jordan Baker. Then he goes to one of Gatsby's legendary parties, which are, he eventually learns, nothing more than shimmering nets thrown out in the hopes of snaring Gatsby's long-lost love, Daisy. We see Gatsby as Nick sees him, magnified and dazzling in the strobe lights of rumor. They say he is a German spy, a nephew of Kaiser Wilhelm, a killer. A killer . . . against such opulence, the speculation about dark deeds is but a further exaltation of the image. The collective instinct is unerring: such a magnificent flower can only be sprung from an evil soil.

Gatsby is never more thrilling, more fantastic, than in those early, champagne-lit conjectures. Soon enough Nick will meet his neighbor and be drawn into his machinations. And though he will remain to the last an unknown quantity, Gatsby will slowly wither from episode to episode. After the mist of legend blows off, he becomes merely mysterious—a financier with peculiar connections, none more peculiar than his "gonnection" to Meyer Wolfsheim, the man who allegedly fixed the 1919 World Series. Then, when his quixotic obsession with Daisy is revealed, his mysteriousness is replaced by an aura of tragic pathos—Gatsby in love is as foolishly human as any of us.

Yet it is this love, the scale of it, that confers upon Gatsby whatever grandeur he finally possesses. Without it he is the Wizard of Oz—a behind-the-scenes operator with extensive ties to bootleggers and dubious financiers. When his dream of love is destroyed, he is nothing but his extravagant props—he is ready for George Wilson's bullet. In the end only his old father, Nick, and a few stragglers attend the funeral. And it is one of these stragglers, "the owl-eyed man," who gets the last word that day: "The poor son-of-a-bitch."

ON THE SURFACE, then, Fitzgerald has written a parable on the perennial American theme of out-sized dreams and their bitter ruin. "I coulda been a contender," Brando says in *On the Waterfront*. In the last scene of *Death of a Salesman*, Charley sums things up for Biff: "Nobody dast blame this man. A salesman is got to dream, boy. It comes with the territory." And

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Not too long ago, then Secretary of State James Baker made the astonishing comment that Israeli settlements in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") were the greatest obstacle to peace in the Middle East. This claim is constantly being repeated; many have come to accept it as truth. Could Mr. Baker possibly be right? It's a serious accusation and it deserves examination.

What are the facts?

A recap of history. Some thumb-nail history may be in order. Large numbers of Jews have been living in these territories since biblical times. Most of the Arabs living there are in fact relative newcomers. "Palestine" is the entire area now covered by Israel, including Judea/Samaria (the so-called "West Bank") and what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. It originally also included the Golan Heights, which later, in an agreement between England and France, were ceded to France, and to Syria as the successor in possession.

In 1922, contrary to the Mandate of the League of Nations, the British severed the entire area east of the Jordan and gave it to the Hashemite Arabs for their assistance in World War I. Thus, fully 75% of Palestine, all of which under the Mandate and under the terms of the Balfour Declaration was meant to be a homeland for the Jewish people, was lost for that purpose. Only the area west of the Jordan was left for Jewish settlement.

How the West Bank became "Arab country". In 1947, after decades of strife between Arabs and Jews, the British decided to relinquish the Mandate. The UN stepped in and proposed a partition plan under which the country (west of the River) was to be divided into respective Arab and Jewish areas. Jerusalem was to be internationalized. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs refused it out of hand. In 1948, on the twice truncated territory

allotted to them by the U.N., the Jews declared their independence, and the state of Israel was born. On the same day, six Arab armies invaded the new-born state. In what can be described as an almost biblical miracle, the Jews defeated them. When an armistice was finally secured, however, TransJordan remained in possession of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem; Egypt remained in possession of the Gaza Strip. TransJordan then renamed itself Jordan.

The Six-Day War. Once in possession of the "West Bank" and East Jerusalem, the Jordanians promptly proceeded to expel all Jews and systematically to desecrate and to destroy most Jewish sacred places, cemeteries and houses of worship. No Jews,

regardless of citizenship were allowed into the "West Bank" or East Jerusalem, the locale of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. In 1967, Egyptian president Abdel Nasser joined by the same array of Arab armies that had unsuccessfully tried to destroy Israel at its birth in 1948, launched another war against Israel "to drive the Jews into the sea" and into oblivion, once and for all. But the Israelis utterly defeated the combined Arab might in the 6-Day War, one of the greatest military victories in history. When the dust of war settled, the Israelis had not only retained their national territory, but had repossessed the territories of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and had occupied the vast Sinai Peninsula.

It is clear from this abbreviated history that the Israeli claim to the "West Bank" is far stronger than that of the Arabs. About 100,000 Jews now live there. And why shouldn't they? Why should the Arab countries and the "West Bank" be the only places in the whole wide world where Jews are not allowed to live? How can 100,000 Jews living among 700,000 Arabs be the "greatest threat to peace"? How can our government be concerned about a new settlement of a few mobile homes on some barren Judean hills as the "greatest threat to peace", when we seem to be oblivious and totally unconcerned about the unrelenting hostility of the Arab countries, the de facto incorporation of Lebanon by Syria, the Scuds and chemical weapons still remaining in Iraq, and the relentless and ominous build-up of Syria's missile forces?

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on and on. We do not have to work very hard to connect Fitzgerald's vision with the narrative of public life in our era—our Wall Street pirates, our stumping politicians looking for the light in the distance as they kick up the dust around their own suspect doings. Self-making is a bloody business. And Nick's awakening—"I wanted the world to be . . . at a sort of moral attention forever"—is ours.

But this parable of rise and fall, of magnificent mansions bought by dirty dealings, is not what determines *Gatsby's* greatness or its ultimate relevance. That is only part of the picture. Indeed, running behind or beneath the obvious legend is a secondary narrative, a narrative that is less about paying the piper than it is about dreaming. About the power of our expectations and our longings. And it is the vibration that is set up when this presses against the ostensible plot that makes *Gatsby* so galvanizing—and so American. To put it simply, the novel argues with itself, and does so just as we do in our own souls. It purports to speak of incidents and moral consequences, but underneath it is communicating something much more ambiguous and suggestive.

First the sober opening:

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since.

"Whenever you feel like criticizing any one," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages you've had."

Our narrator is going to give us a lesson, tell us a story about wising up—about coming to mature terms with human frailty. He is back from the East and *Gatsby* has fallen. But already by the fourth paragraph we sense that Nick is at odds with himself. Directly after his claim that he wants "no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart," he introduces the name of *Gatsby*—*Gatsby*, who "represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn," but in whom Nick had found "an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person and which it is not likely I shall ever find again."

This ambivalence is never really resolved. There is the tale, and there is the teller. And time and again we are



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but that's no matter—tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . And one fine morning—

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.

This might well be the most lyrical patch of prose in our literature. Taken by itself it sounds florid, overwrought. There is only the last sentence, implacable beneath the lulling sway of its syllables, to mitigate the visionary excess. But encountering it as we do on the far side of *Gatsby's* exploded paradise, we are stirred at the deepest level. In a stroke Fitzgerald has forged the link between *Gatsby's* belief in love—the fabulous self-making enterprise it fostered—and the originating dream of the first European settlers. The mystery of this corrupt but also pathetic and forgivable man is seen as an attribute of something larger. As Nick says of *Gatsby*,

He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.

Nick has here restored to him the greatness of his desire. It is a desire that partakes of everything we feel when we consider our own fate, private and collective, under the larger dispensation, what the philosophers once called "the aspect of eternity." Insofar as we feel the inchoate promise of ourselves and our historical presence, we are joined to him.

"So we beat on . . ." The boats are not defeated by the current—nothing so simple. They are "borne back ceaselessly into the past." And what is that past but the vision of those Dutch sailors, the imagining of a new history before which all other initiatives pale? If *The Great Gatsby* is indeed a cautionary tale, then it is really cautioning us against selling ourselves short, against turning in fear or disappointment from the lyrical call of our nature. *Gatsby* was not a fool for dreaming, only for not knowing how dreams intersect with realities.

Similarly, if *Gatsby* is a book for us today, it is not so in the obvious moralizing way. We are not asked to repudiate our more excessive selves. Rather, we

are to recover in altered form something of the power of that intoxication, that amorous bent toward greater possibilities of feeling and action. Our basic excessiveness is not about greed or display, nor is it a frantic escape from the roll-call confinements of dailiness. It is a surviving trace of the awe that set everything into motion. And wounded and compromised as we may feel, there is a clue about renewal in that essential American image of dark fields rolling on under the night. □

The Butcher's Bill

by Jack Beatty

THE IRISH TROUBLES :
A Generation of Violence 1967-1992
by J. Bowyer Bell.

St. Martin's Press/Thomas Dunne,
\$35.00.

THE IRISH Troubles have not been an altogether fruitless agony. Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital, from twenty years of practice, has become a leading trauma center ("the best place in the world to be shot is the Lower Falls"), and the city has a name in medical circles for reconstructive knee surgery, its surgeons having grown nimble in restoring kneecaps blown apart by Irish Republican Army gunmen administering the savage discipline for which they are notorious. The Troubles have also been the subject of a gripping documentary film, Marcel Ophuls's *A Sense of Loss*; have spawned moving poetry from Seamus Heaney and Thomas Kinsella, among others; have been woven through at least one outstanding novel, Bernard MacLaverty's *Cal*, and superb short stories by Benedict Kiely and William Trevor; and, in Conor Cruise O'Brien's *States of Ireland*, have even extruded a work of political theory. Now, with this book of J. Bowyer Bell's, they have occasioned a monumental narrative history. Monumental in two senses: in its 855 small-type, weekend-killing, engagement-canceling pages, and in its scholarship, style, and great-book tone.

Some 7,000 books and articles have

been written about the latest round of the Troubles, which began only in 1967, and Bell appears to have read them all in working up his synoptic history. A former research professor at Columbia's Institute of War and Peace Studies and currently the president of an international consulting firm, he is an expert on terrorism and counter-insurgency and the author of earlier books and monographs on the IRA. Thirty years ago he went to Ireland to spend a summer by the Barrow River, and the country caught him in its doomy spell—"I could not get away, ever." He ends his foreword with a Joycean

J.B.B.
New York
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that is testament to a dedication rare in these mercenary times.

The level of the writing in *The Irish Troubles* is consistently high; Bell never settles for mere denotative adequacy when eloquence will do. Whole dense passages read like prose poems richer in suggestion than they are in statement. Bell has a Conradian gift of phrase ("the reverberation of atrocity," "normality by decree," "the dynamics of brutality") and a habit of ending paragraphs with terse summary formulations ("The republicans killed for the faith and the loyalists because they lacked it") that fix his meanings in the mind. So much writing today is a kind of tonal imperialism. The writer, having found the grail of his "voice," won't alter it to fit the circumstances he is describing. Bell shifts his tone with the life under his pen. Now ironic, now sardonic, now elegiac, now tragic, his voice is at the service of his material, so that you don't notice the writing for the feeling it conveys. Finally, as the fruit of his aesthetic commitment to language and its objectivity, Bell has managed to be as fair as humanly possible to all sides in this fearfully complicated war—"the most protracted armed struggle of modern times"—without diluting the deliverances of his exacting moral intelligence. No IRA man, no Protestant paramilitary, few decisively relevant British Ministers or Republic of Ireland statesmen, could read *The Irish Troubles* without confronting their varying complicity in murder and maiming.

Bell is not writing political history so much as "an analysis of the evolution of the gun in Irish politics since 1967"—for the gun, along with its more lethal cousin the bomb, has driven politics off the stage in Northern Ireland. Yet the gun did not enter into this latest round of the Troubles at the very outset; and for some months it appeared that non-violent action would lead to justice for the oppressed Catholic minority in the North. That a story conceived in hope should become "an Irish tragedy in endless acts," one spilling out of Ireland and into the shops of Manchester and London and the garden of No. 10 Downing Street, makes for sorrowing reading.

NORTHERN IRELAND is a province of the United Kingdom. That threshold fact about it is often overlooked by Irish-American nationalists, brave as lions from the safety of their barstools, prating their childishly simple solution to the Troubles: "Brits out." Northern Ireland is part of the Brits. It has been so since it was created, in 1921, in the wake of the struggle for Irish independence that began in bloody earnest in 1919 and that ended with Britain's abandoning the south of Ireland and the creation there of the twenty-six-county Irish Free State. The six counties of the North remained British because a majority of the people who lived there did not then want—as they do not now want—to cease being British citizens. This majority, Protestant by religion on an island overwhelmingly Catholic, proceeded to set up a democratic despotism in Ulster, the ancient name of the province of which the six counties are a part, ruling over the Catholic minority left in the North after partition with what Bell rightly calls a "raw, crude, cruel politics of domination," akin to though in some ways worse than the system of segregation in the American South.

In the late 1960s, partly influenced by the example of the African-American civil-rights movement, small groups of Catholics in Northern Ireland began organizing marches and demonstrations against gross inequities in public services and the denial by brazen gerrymander of basic voting rights for the minority. These marches and demonstrations were met with violence by the almost exclusively Protestant

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police force of the province, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, or RUC, and by mobs of angry Protestant civilians, who scorned the Catholics' demand for fair treatment as a screen for the guerrilla-terrorists of the Irish Republican Army.

The IRA had never accepted the division of Ireland into two states and had mounted violent campaigns against the British connection down through the years. Nonetheless, when Protestant mobs burst into the Catholic ghettos in Belfast and Londonderry, the IRA was nowhere in evidence, having all but melted away a few years earlier, its dream of reuniting Ireland by force broken against the ramparts of the Northern Ireland garrison state. But when, in August of 1969, British troops had to be sent into the province to restore order and protect the Catholics—who served them tea and cookies—from Protestant mobs, the IRA saw its chance to transform a semi-hopeful chaos into a war against Britain.

No more than Irish nationalists in America has the IRA ever recognized the Protestant majority of Ulster, Irish all, as the chief obstacle to its ambition. If it did, it would see how insanely counterproductive its bombings and assassinations are, each outrage pushing the Protestant majority deeper into intransigence, into loyalism to the British crown, into hatred of the Republican dream. No; as Bell is at pains to show, for the working-class gunmen of the IRA, raised on race memories of "perfidious Albion," as for the great Irish revolutionary hero Wolfe Tone, the one obstacle, the sole enemy, is the British imperial state, the everlasting source of all Ireland's "political evils." The 3,000 people killed in the Troubles so far have died for a neurotic fantasy, a demand that the present repeat the past. Yeats said it years ago, during the earlier Irish Troubles: "We had fed the heart on fantasies/The heart's grown brutal from the fare."

Ever since the IRA launched its war, with weapons and money supplied by Irish-Americans who would never be held accountable for subsidizing murder far away, the dynamics of brutality have taken over in Northern Ireland. IRA killings provoke excesses from the security forces, which provoke sympathy from Catholics who are not ordinarily pro-IRA (the overwhelming majority), which provokes Protestant

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militancy and Protestant terror, which provoke more IRA killings, which provoke the security forces to yet more grisly excess, which provokes the Catholics, who provoke the Protestants in a cycle of hatred and revenge. There have been efforts to restart politics in the North, notably the so-called Sunningdale Agreement of 1973, which would have allowed Catholic parties to share power in a considerably devolved government. But a Protestant general strike smashed Sunningdale, as one would no doubt smash any future efforts along similar lines. So the gun has ruled, and much of Bell's book is a casualty list, a tale of babies run over by fleeing gunmen, old men gunned down on their doorsteps, British soldiers blasted to bits by bombs, innocent passersby shot up in British ambushes, interned Catholics tortured by their British captors, Protestant gunmen hacking the faces off Catholic victims, Republicans shooting other Republicans to settle pathetically petty feuds, and Provisional IRA hunger-strikers dying for their wretched, cruel, impossible dream.

"Dirty wars have no heroes, only victims," Bell writes, and though the number of Troubles victims is small next to the harvest of mayhem in our cities ("In less than two years more people are murdered in New York City than were killed in twenty years of the 'Troubles'"), that is no comfort to the bereaved.

"The problem had no solution—that was the problem": thus Bell summarizes the pessimism that is realism about the Troubles. Though he relates the hopeful details of the agreement on security and symbolism reached by the Dublin and London governments in the mid-1980s, the pessimistic view is one he seems to share. British withdrawal from Ulster, once advocated by Paul Johnson in his *New Statesman* days, would mean capitulation to the few dozen gunmen of the IRA and might even trigger civil war between Protestants and Catholics. Cracking down even harder on the Provos, long advocated by the Reverend Ian Paisley, the Protestant divine and Ulster incendiary, would drive an already militarized state to tyranny, and every gunman caught in the net would win the IRA ten recruits from among the mass of poor Catholics who would be its victims. Reform, the middle way, has not been tolerable to the Protestants, who want as much as

the IRA to return to the past—in their case the past of safety and domination, which ended forever in Ulster with the Catholic civil-rights demonstrations of a generation ago. Moreover, even if by some miraculous conversion to common sense the Protestants embraced reform, it would be vulnerable in the short term to a standard IRA tactic—the use of promiscuous atrocity to polarize an already divided society. Of course, the IRA could eventually bomb the Protestants out of the North, make the place so miserable that they would up and leave. But that tremendous improbability does not seem likely to happen soon. Meanwhile, for the people of Northern Ireland, Protestant and Catholic alike, "There are years to go and butcher's bills still to pay." □

Brief Reviews



TUMULT AND SILENCE AT SECOND CREEK by Winthrop D. Jordan. Louisiana State University, \$24.95. In 1861, encouraged by word that federal forces were soon to take New Orleans, a group of slaves on several plantations in wealthy Adams County, Mississippi, planned rebellion. They were inexperienced and unwary conspirators, quickly discovered and promptly hanged. There was no public report of the affair—"no legal court reports, no articles in newspapers, no pamphlets justifying or denouncing anything about the business." Professor Jordan has tracked the episode down through diaries, letters, and the slapdash records of the examination committee that investigated the conspiracy and convicted its members. The proceedings of that committee were, by the way, illegal, because Mississippi had quite elaborate laws for dealing with slave uprisings, none of which were observed. Given the fragmentary nature of the evidence, Professor Jordan has employed great skill in reconstructing what happened and the probable rea-

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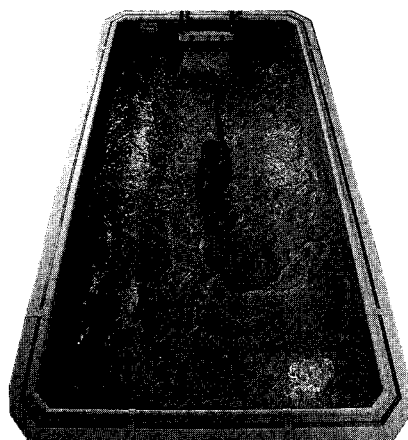
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sons for the improper actions of the committee and the silence surrounding the whole matter. He has also described convincingly the ambivalent attitude of slaveholders who on the one hand professed confidence in the contented devotion of their "people," and on the other hand worried constantly about bloody revolt. The book expands into a study of general beliefs and social assumptions extending well beyond a single barbarous episode. One major intent of the conspirators was that "whipping colored people would stop."

HAUNTS OF THE BLACK MASSEUR by Charles Sprawson. Pantheon, \$23.00. Mr. Sprawson's reflections on swimming and swimmers are largely, although not entirely, devoted to British practitioners of the art, and necessarily to such of those as have recorded their sensations. Byron, Swinburne, Clough, and the ineffable Baron Corvo figure largely, as does Shelley, a nonswimmer who qualifies because of his ultimately fatal attraction to water. Mr. Sprawson believes that he has found a pattern among swimmers—"generally out of harmony with their age, idealists who felt deeply the futility of life, the contrast between what life is and what it ought to be." This position does not account for nonswimming idealists or nonliterary swimmers, but it does permit intriguing speculations and some melancholy facts about once-splendid waters now ruined by dams and industrial pollution.

THE QUICK by Agnes Rossi. Norton, \$17.95. Ms. Rossi's novella and the accompanying stories center largely on reactions to death. The thoughts and actions of the varied characters are believable, the writing is skillful and at times witty, but to read the collection at one sitting is not advisable, for it comes to resemble a stroll through sad cypress and weeping willow.

SOMETIMES YOU SEE IT COMING by Kevin Baker. Crown, \$20.00. Mr. Baker is clearly a passionate and knowledgeable baseball fan, whose first novel carries the reader straight into the grit and racket of the game. The ostensible plot follows the career of a great but grimly aloof player and eventually reveals what made John Barr a frosty loner. In fact the ups and downs and wiles and strate-

gies of the field, as described by The Old Swizzlehead (who is neither old nor swizzleheaded), are always more interesting than Barr's troubles. Swizzlehead maliciously analyzes a grandstanding manager, despises all owners, refers to sportswriters as flies (meaning the green kind), and reports gaudy sexual misbehavior on and off the road. Never mind Barr—play ball!

NOW YOU KNOW by Michael Frayn. Viking, \$22.00. Mr. Frayn's dryly amusing novel is based on the difficulty—even the impossibility—of consistent conduct. His hero is Terry, a scalawag semi-politician devoted to unearthing and publicizing officially secret government proceedings. His heroine is Hilary, a seemingly rather stuffy employee of the habitually secretive Home Office. When the two collide, absurdity breaks loose, along with minor riot and major revelations. The characterization is sharp, the several narrative voices distinctive, and the whole tale steadily engaging.

FIRE AND CIVILIZATION by Johan Goudsblom. Penguin/Allen Lane, \$22.00. The author points out that use of fire is the only trait that human beings can with certainty be said to share with no other species—a fact so obvious that it can easily be overlooked, like Poe's purloined letter. "The original domestication of fire formed," Mr. Goudsblom argues, "the first great ecological transition brought about by humans." He holds that subsequent cultural developments have all depended on fire, and supports his opinion with assorted and effective examples, from slash-and-burn agriculture to the internal-combustion engine. His book is an interesting discussion of a force seldom considered in such all-encompassing terms.

COUGAR by Karen McCall and Jim Dutcher. Sierra Club, \$30.00. Ms. McCall's text covers the activities of the cougar Catrina during the year in which she bore and raised a litter of kittens while restricted to a five-acre enclosure. The information is less than astonishing. Mr. Dutcher's photographs, however, are beautiful and, predictably, will arouse in any cat-fancier the suicidal itch to pet a puma.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams

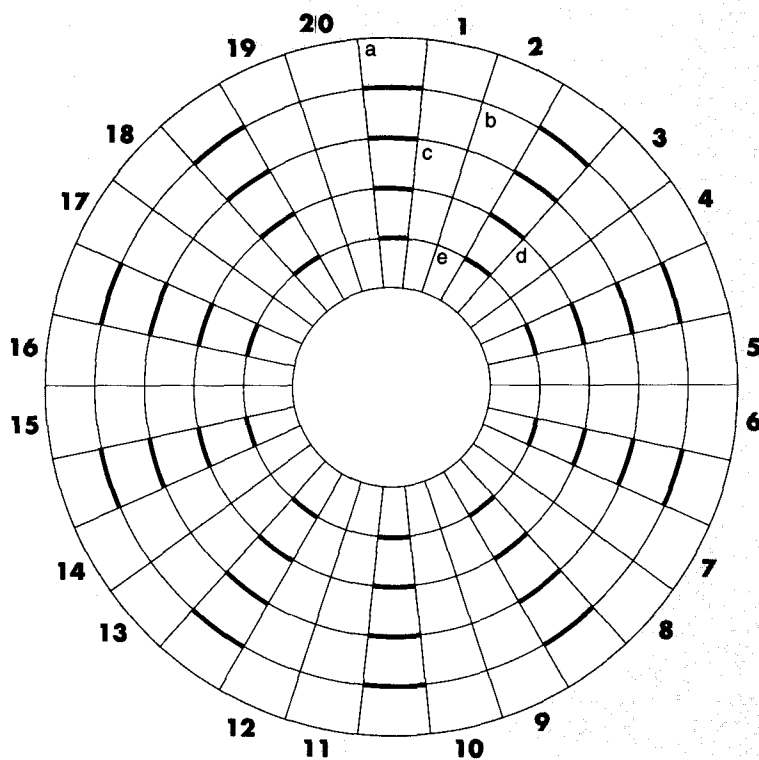
THE PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

SHOOTING HOOPS

Solvers are invited to take shots at the hoop (empty, centermost circle) from various spots on the perimeter (1–20), as in the playground game of Horse. Each of these 20 words goes from outside to inside. If the word is 5 letters long, it will use a space in each concentric circle but fall short of the center hoop; if it is 6 letters long, its last letter will fall into the hoop. The 11 basket-scoring letters, clockwise from 1, will spell our salutation to players. To make the game interesting, the 20 shots are clued randomly and must be located with the aid of the Circle words, entered clockwise and consecutively starting from their lettered spaces (a–e). Answers include one proper noun and one foreign word.

See page 130 for Puzzler contest details.
The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 116.



SHOTS

Hoops' sounds
Forbid guard's shots
Dribble ball, avoiding all touch?
Numbers of spectators following a shooting game's balls
Like a basketball player, usually round with fat
Seattle's opening many positions
Regarding a number in basket
Confront defense of a Chicago team?
Not comprehending the Spanish, Russell misconstrued insults
Bird to pivot incompletely
Flapping of Dr. J's long arms
Marine group members recalled I shoot 100–0
Show a lot of feeling for Cleveland's center spot
Big league traveling gear
Boston University rejected one good Mexican
Unbridled wrath grips leader of Miami Heat
Terrific bench player squeezes by

Passionate members of Garden throng
Joins rebuilding Nets, stifling hesitation
Upset slated for fans?

CIRCLES

- a. Pass is thrown with a hand (6)
Shot preceding a play (5)
A help maintaining top defense against Blazers? (8)
Bug Bucks' starter, making mistake (4)
Clipper's forward turned, ran, and rotated shakily (7)
- b. Old Tarkanian team having hoop in game, and not caring (8)
NBA center taken in by European money (9)
Before second halves, Jazz guarding Wildcat (6)
Fast-breaking feature exciting to a male (7)
- c. Maverick now put in city section (6)

- State article about Cowens rebounding (6)
By losing opener, Wilt is not on the level (5)
Magic is apologetic about pair of Celtics (7)
Unsold, making error out, is not convinced (6)
- d. Goon's technical-foul embrace (4)
Sees Cavalier onset (5)
Agitated for role to change the parquet? (7)
Shooter chewed gum—an indefinite amount (6)
"Threw a bad ball," Ewing finally said (8)
- e. Freshly establishes tone before court games (6)
Little ball-holder leads New York (5)
Bent, Doc circles gym, beginning to dunk (7)
Hot center holds it back (6)
Last of fans pays attention to Clippers (6)

NOTE: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

WORD HISTORIES

BY CRAIG M. CARVER

patsy

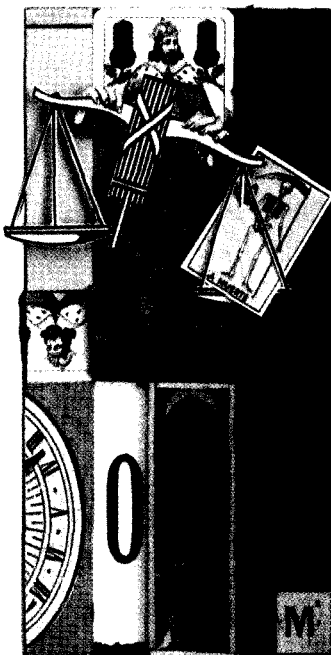
When Kentucky passed a generous tax-incentive program to attract new businesses last summer, other states quickly came up with programs of their own. "Ohio can't stand by and be a *patsy*," one Ohio senator said. The history of the Americanism *patsy* (a person who is ridiculed, deceived, or victimized) is not certain. One source suggests that *patsy* may have its origin in an unfortunate family of fifteenth-century Florence named Pazzi. The Pazzis attacked the powerful Medici family—an act ridiculed to this



day for its recklessness—and for their temerity were murdered. A simpler and less fanciful explanation is that *patsy* derives from the Italian word *pazzo* (crazy), which is, accord-

ing to Italian dictionaries, probably from the Latin *patiens*, "one who is sick." Brought to America by Italian immigrants, *pazzo* was Americanized to *patsy*. Another strong possibility is

that *patsy* comes from the common Italian name *Pasquale*, which after waves of Italian immigration was Americanized. *Patsy* then came to be used as a generic name for an immigrant Italian greenhorn—a person who presumably could be easily duped. Some say the sense of an innocent victim also derives from *Pasquale*'s root meaning (*Pasqua*=Easter). Interestingly, *patsy* also means "good." This meaning may come from the Irish-American *Patsy*, an affectionate nickname for *Patrick*—hence, "one of our boys," "a fine fellow," and, finally, "fine, good."



doom

For forty-eight long hours last November two cameramen trapped in a crater of Kilauea, the Hawaiian volcano, despaired of ever being rescued, owing to dense steam and noxious fumes. "I knew they weren't going to get any helicopters in, and after the rope attempts stopped, I was starting to feel *doomed*," one of the men later said. *Doom* (a sad fate) derives from the Indo-European root **dhe-* (to set or put), the

root sense being "that which is set or put down." This yielded the Old Teutonic **domoz* and the Old English *dom*, "a statute or decree," because a written law is set down on paper ("Thys synd tha *domas* the thu him taecan scealt" [These are the laws which thou shalt take to them]—Ælfric, *Exodus*, ca. 1000). The *Doombook* was a book of *dooms*, or laws, compiled by the great King Alfred (ca. 849–899). When a *doom* was applied in litigation, the result was a judgment. In the popular mind, law and judgment were so closely associated that the Old English *dom* or *doom* soon came to mean "a judgment or sentence formally pronounced," a meaning that did not survive much past the eighteenth century ("O! Partial Judge, Thy *Doom* has me undone"—*Tatler*, 1709). This sense was retained in the English words *doom-settle* (judgment seat), *doomsday* (judgment day), and *doomsman* (a judge). Because a judgment was often irrevocable and adverse, *doom* came to mean the unhappy end itself. *Doom*'s early sense of "statute" also yielded the meaning "legal jurisdiction," then "domain, realm," and finally "condition, state." This meaning survives today in the suffix in words like *kingdom*, *wisdom*, and *freedom*.

cad

The talk-show host Dick Cavett rankled some women at last spring's Vassar College commencement when he told an anecdote from his own undergraduate days involving photos of nude Vassar women. In a letter to *The New York Times* responding to their criticism, he denied being a "*cad*." *Cad* (a fellow of ungentlemanly behavior, especially toward women) is ultimately from the Latin *caput* (head), which gave rise to the diminutive *capdet* (little chief) in the dialect of fifteenth-century Gascony. The Gascon *capdets*, who served in the French court, were usually the younger sons of nobles. *Capdet* then came to mean both "a young gentleman in military training" and "a younger son or brother." Adopted in England as *cadet* in the seventeenth century, the word brought with it both meanings. The French pronunciation, *ka day*, became in Scots English *ka' day*, or *cad-die* ("The gentry are no doubt philosophers enough to bring up their bairns like sheep to the slaughter, and despatch them as *cadies* to Bengal and the Cape of Good Hope"—David Moir, *The Life of Mansie Wauch*, 1828). *Caddie* soon came to mean "an errand boy or odd-jobs man," and in Scots "a golf-

er's attendant." In England *caddie* was abbreviated to *cad* by students at Oxford and other elite schools, who applied the term contemptuously to the lower-class local townsmen, who presumably were often employed to do odd jobs ("If I should chance to run over a *cad* / I can pay for the damage if ever so bad"—Arthur Clough, *Dipsychus*, 1859). From the earlier meaning of "not a gentleman" came the more recent meaning of "an ungentlemanly fellow."

